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The Influence of Nationalism on Sino-Japanese Relations

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**The Influence of Nationalism on
Sino-Japanese Relations**

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This thesis examines the influence of domestic nationalist movements on bilateral relations between China and Japan. I will use Two-level game theory as the primary analytical framework. Two-level theory provides a useful lens for examining policy formation at discrete stages, domestic, international, and domestic again in order to ratify international agreements. I will examine three primary cases through this framework to study the effects of domestic nationalism on bilateral diplomacy between Japan and China. The East China Sea Dispute is the only actual territorial dispute between Japan and China. The Yasukuni Shrine controversy and the textbook controversy are both discrete elements of a larger dispute over war memory and guilt, as well as construction of historical narratives for political purpose. I will seek to show that domestic nationalism has a strong limiting effect on the ways in which China and Japan are able to interact with each other on the global stage, as leaders must retain their legitimacy against a backdrop of unresolved historical issues and domestic contention.

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Regional Relations.....	1
Chapter 2: Historical Context.....	21
Chapter 3: East China Sea and the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands.....	41
Chapter 4: Yasukuni Shrine.....	68
Chapter 5: Textbook Controversy.....	89
Chapter 6: Conclusion.....	109
Bibliography.....	121

Chapter 1: Regional Relations

The diplomatic history between China and Japan has been peppered with numerous difficulties that impede regional cooperation and security. This is in spite of the increasing importance that international ties hold for both nations, particularly ties with each other. I will seek to explore some of why these powers cannot come to an agreement on several key issues through the use of two level game theory and investigation of nationalist movements. Making the assertion that domestic politics have an effect on international policy is not particularly controversial, but the specifics can be difficult to trace. There are, however, several specific incidents in which the policies and interactions of Chinese and Japanese foreign policy leaders were shaped or forced by the actions of domestic nationalists.

Some of the cases that have derailed smooth relations seem small. Why does it matter if a prime minister visits a shrine dedicated to war dead? Who cares what is written in Japanese middle-school textbooks? How is arresting the skipper of a fishing trawler a major international incident? All of these questions have answers that lie in the complicated and painful history of Sino-Japanese relations. Much of this conflict originates in the second Sino-Japanese War and its long-term aftermath. Old wounds are re-opened easily, and there are strong feelings that Japan has not done enough to make up for its war legacy.

This has resulted in the presentation of even small issues like misstatements by Japanese ministers as part of an ongoing post-war narrative within China. Japan,

meanwhile, often considers the matter of the war settled as the result of an agreement concluded with Mao during the normalization of relations in 1972, and many years of Official Development Aid (ODA) to China. Why then do Chinese activists persist in demanding Japanese apologies? Why do Japanese ultra-nationalists deny the existence of well-documented events such as the Nanjing Massacre? How do these voices affect bilateral relations?

Nationalism is quite simply the identification of individuals with a political entity. Often this is the modern concept of a “nation,” a land-holding state with clearly (or almost clearly) marked borders. Nationalist narratives are often constructed to give the nation a much longer historical thread. Historically, nationalism emerged with industrialization and the modernization of communications, allowing much tighter administration of far larger numbers of people—people who often did not identify very strongly with each other. Nationalist movements often glorify and essentialize the concept of their nation, speaking of “intrinsic character” of their particular state, and conflating the state with the people. This is not inherently negative, but nationalism is easily manipulated to serve xenophobic or militarily aggressive ends.

Nationalism is a double-edged sword which states must employ carefully, in that they are building a mob that hungers for national glory. If the leadership fails the tests they have set themselves, they can face an angry, organized, and mobilized populace. If they name an enemy, they can find it impossible to negotiate peacefully without alienating their forces at home.

Nationalism in Japan not spark the same kind of intense national introspection that characterized Germany after World War II. Instead, the LDP government of the “1955 system” relied upon a strong nationalist bloc of voters as a key unshakable constituency for its leaders. This bloc moved swiftly after the war to consolidate their position, which included a minimum of purging and examination of wartime behavior, particularly by officials and especially not of the emperor. The concept of “national repentance” did not take hold in the public consciousness.¹

Japanese nationalism has been shaped heavily by aspirations for peace, and even those who glorify the worst of Japan's Imperial past claim to be doing so in the name of greater peace. The recent change of governing parties has caused the nationalist groups to lose some influence in national politics, though they are still a force to be reckoned with. The prestige and power of Japan is paramount to these elements in Japanese society and government.

Nationalism in China has experienced considerable top-down influence in recent decades. The sagging of Communist ideology had to be replaced and brewing unrest under reforms had to be minimized. Culminating in the patriotic education campaigns of the 1990s, China has experienced a massive surge in nationalistic feeling.² Much of this sentiment has been shaped through presentation of China's national struggle against a hostile outer world, paying particular attention to the second Sino-Japanese war.

¹ Seraphim, Franziska. War Memory and Social Politics in Japan, 1945-2006. Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2006. 5.

² Wang, Zheng. “National Humiliation, History Education, and the Politics of Historical Memory: Patriotic Education Campaign in China.” *International Studies Quarterly*. Vol. 52. No. 4. (2008): 784

Outbreaks of nationalist expression in China are sometimes orchestrated by the state, but crowds are difficult beasts to control. China's exploding nationalistic sentiment is fueled by an expanding popular media that is increasingly free to print what it wishes, especially on the subject of opposition to Japan.

These national movements affect foreign policy by creating a rivalrous atmosphere between Japan and China. While they do not generally advocate for war, as some nationalistic movements have in the past, they certainly advocate for victory of their nation over the opposing nation in whatever issue is being contested. In Japan, they were a necessary political bloc for the ruling party and remain a strong political force. In China, the nationalist narrative has created a wider, popular nationalist movement. This narrative creates some of the current government's legitimacy in having fought off the Japanese invaders during World War II, and in fighting now for China's proper place in the world.

Two-Level Games

Two-level game theory was first introduced by Robert Putnam. In essence, Putnam argues that all international politics are influenced by domestic politics and the limitations are imposed on negotiations by domestic coalitions.³ Most simply, one could view international and domestic policymaking as two game boards in which moves made upon one board are reflected upon the other. International negotiations are referred to as "Level I" and domestic negotiations required to secure an agreement at the international

³ Putnam, Robert D. "Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games." *International Organization*. 42 (Summer 1988): 427-460.

level are referred to as “Level II.” Putnam argued that all foreign policy negotiations are actually two-level games, to the extent that they are reflected on both boards. He rejected the unitary actor model of foreign policy negotiations in which leaders set policy and then enforce it domestically, with domestic politics having little effect on the process of negotiations.

Two-level game theory was primarily devised with regards to the formation of treaties, though not all negotiations or incidents between nations results in an agreement. Leaders must negotiate effectively as they can within constraints created by their domestic concerns in order to create an agreement that can be ratified. In the case of liberal democracies, ratification usually involves seeking the approval of a domestic legislative or bureaucratic body with oversight powers. In non-democratic societies, there is often a domestic support game or even individual career concerns which affect the acceptance or rejection of an agreement.

This creates a win-set for each side in a negotiation, with acceptable outcomes forming a spectrum. Areas of acceptable win-sets that overlap between sides create the compatible win-sets for a given scenario. The compatible win-sets for a given scenario are limited not just by what the negotiating executive at Level I is able to work out with their counterpart, but also what will be accepted by the domestic coalition at Level II.

The negotiating executive, while not a unitary actor, still has their own interests which they will represent in negotiations. Leaders will not make treaties which would force them to rebuild their domestic coalitions of support, even if that treaty might be

acceptable to a majority of their general public.

If no compatible win-set exists, negotiations will most likely fail. Leaders try to negotiate for the maximum possible advantage within the shared acceptable range in order to craft a successful agreement. If a leader produces an agreement that oversteps domestic constraints, they may be threatened with involuntary defection, which is the failure of ratification or adoption of a treaty. An example of this is Woodrow Wilson after World War I and the Treaty of Versailles. Leaders will use the threat of involuntary defection in order to receive more favorable terms, but too much insistence upon the threat of defection can cause negotiations to fail entirely.

Lastly, domestic and international policymaking does not simply move directly from domestic support-building to foreign policymaking to ratification. There are often rapid alterations and side-payments made to domestic factions in order to receive key support, making the two game boards very busy places indeed. Leaders therefore will often use side-payments and pre-negotiation consensus-building to create a viable win-set for negotiations on favorable terms.

Putnam focused his theory solely on negotiations that were aimed at securing formal agreements. However, the theory can be extended farther than that. Many diplomatic issues or statements are influenced by domestic concerns, and while a successful treaty could be considered an end to a particular “game,” the ongoing process of international interaction continues with influences drawn from Level I and Level II. In cases such as these the concept of ratification is not applicable, but leaders most

assuredly make decisions with domestic approval in mind and can suffer considerable career damage through missteps.

This theory can be applied to Sino-Japanese diplomatic relations. The actions by each side (or actor) are rational decisions within a two-level split between domestic and foreign policy goals. The domestic goals of nationalists and creation of nationalistic narratives often requires a fairly intractable position that can be perceived abroad as “strong,” such as the positions required of Cold War-era US presidents when dealing with leaders of the USSR. The domestic policy frames used by China and Japan are often based upon narratives that are incompatible with each other at Level I, and are created with the aim of securing domestic support. This negotiating frame does not allow for successful agreement on many major issues.. It only allows the creation of domestic prestige through perceived ideological or territorial victory over the other power.

In these cases, the “transaction benefits” of failure to successfully reach an agreement are sufficient to create incentives for no-agreement in order to fit within the dialogue of political legitimacy employed by domestic factions. These “transaction benefits” are primarily domestic political capital which can be necessary for pursuit of a leader's agenda. The victory conditions of the game become narrowed to causing damage to the other party. As a result harmonious relations between the two powers become extremely difficult.

Cases

The last decade in Sino-Japanese relations is peppered with occasional incidents

which by themselves do not have a major impact on relations, but form a greater trend of disharmony. Major incidents or very long-running disputes make up the body of the cases examined here. The cases are meant to be representative of the major obstacles towards building a more harmonious relationship between Japan and China.

The first and probably most major issue is the East China Sea dispute, including the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands. The maritime borders of the East China Sea weren't a matter of great contention until the 1970s when surveys disclosed large deposits of oil and natural gas under the seabed. The ownership of the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands also became a contested issue at this time due to the islands' proximity to these deposits.

This is one of the only disputes between China and Japan involving physical territory. The Diaoyu/Senkaku islands are a lingering issue of contention from World War II-era treaty agreements which leave some doubt about the status of the islands. Even their status as “islands” is in dispute, and whether or not they qualify for that term under existing sea law is vital to determining certain territorial claims upon the seabed resources.

The Diaoyu/Senkaku landforms themselves have also become important national symbols to diehards in both China and Japan. Incidents such as Japanese nationalists building a lighthouse on one of the islands has then forced an international response from both respective governments.

Most recently, a Chinese fishing trawler collided with a Japanese Coast Guard boat in what Japan claimed as territorial waters. The arrest and eventual release of the

crew of the vessel was a major international incident that caused the cancellation of several other scheduled talks between Japan and China, some specifically about the East China Sea issue.⁴

Large protests occurred in both China and Japan over the handling of the issue by the opposing governments. Japan could not easily make concessions in the handling of the crew or the boat lest they seem to be acknowledging China's claim. China had to maintain a position of demanding immediate return of their citizens from an illegal arrest, lest they seem to acknowledge Japan's territorial claims. In this sense, no compatible win-set existed, and the eventual outcome of the release satisfied neither party.

Officials confronted with these matters have to code their responses to placate nationalistic factions on the domestic side, and they have little reason to be conciliatory on this issue when large natural resource reserves are ultimately at stake. In this way, the nationalistic demands of Level II can be seen as both fueling international disagreement, and being utilized by officials at Level I as a means of reinforcing a resistant position. This, combined with other complicated maritime legal wrangling has created a fine territorial mess in these waters.

The second major case involves visits to Yasukuni Shrine by Japanese prime ministers, particularly Koizumi. The Yasukuni Shrine houses the war dead from the Meiji era forward, including several Class-A war criminals who had previously been enshrined elsewhere. Japanese ultra-nationalism has at its heart several war-bereaved

⁴ Japan Times Online. "China delays gas talks over collision." 12 Sept. 2010.
<<http://search.japantimes.co.jp/mail/nn20100912a1.html>>

societies formed after the war by grieving families and veterans. Simply honoring the loss of persons killed in war is not so serious, but their goals also include the denial and downplaying of wartime atrocities committed by soldiers in order to maintain national pride. Yasukuni shrine is supported almost exclusively by these groups. The shrine also operates a museum that promotes a glorified nationalist view of Japanese participation in WWII, one that presents the war as a glorious attempt to liberate Asia from Western colonial domination.

Ministerial visits to the shrine are presented as “personal visits” by officials, but other Asian nations feel differently. Most vocally, China and Korea object to these visits by Japanese officials. Nations invaded by Japan during the Imperial era feel that visits to the shrine by government officials represent Japan's ongoing lack of genuine contrition for their Imperial past, and that it is disrespectful to those damaged in the war. This is particularly the case with the enshrinement of the Class-A criminals.

Perceptions of the Japanese are influenced by the ongoing support of the shrine, while Japan sees this as undue interference in its domestic affairs. From the perspective of two-level games, this is a clear division in which a prime minister must walk a very careful path in order to retain their constituency among the nationalist factions while avoiding the alienation of neighbors. Thus far, prime ministers who have made the choice to visit the shrine have not been able to balance Level I relations with appeasement of Level II constituents.

While Japan considers these visits to be a domestic and even private matter, the

fact that China has made such vocal protest against ministerial visits creates a Level I discussion that Japan must answer in some fashion, even if the choice is often a simple dismissal of the issue. The issues of unresolved war legacies between China and Japan looms large when the shrine comes up. This creates a direct intrusion of the international into the domestic, and suddenly the Level II process is more directly a part of the Level I game, in the actions of prime ministers and responses of Japanese citizen-groups, nationalist and otherwise.

This does not destroy Two-level interaction, but in it does create a situation in which domestic actions are thrust onto the world stage. It is unlikely that a compatible win-set can be achieved for such a scenario, as Japan is faced with the choice of sacrificing what it perceives as its own autonomy to a foreign demand, or offending the requesting neighbor. China, meanwhile, must demand that Japanese officials cease their visits in order to retain legitimacy as a guardian of public history and justice for the Chinese people.

Another Japanese domestic issue that invites criticism from Japan's immediate neighbors is the so-called "textbook controversy," an ongoing dispute about the contents of Japanese history textbooks. The Japanese Ministry of Education (formally the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, referred to hereafter as MEXT) must approve all textbooks that are to be offered for use in Japanese classrooms. Individual school administrations are then able to select their preferred texts from the authorized list. On several different occasions, MEXT has demanded changes in texts

that gloss over or idealize Japan's actions during the Imperial era, substituting words like “advanced into” for “invade” and “liberated” for “conquered.” It has also approved glaringly inaccurate right-wing texts which receive a very tiny market share, but they upset Japan's neighbors by their approval.

These descriptions of the Japanese war in Asia are offensive to the nations that Japan invaded and damaged during WWII, and so their governments (China and North Korea, most fervently) protest to Japan. The Japanese public itself views the nationalist texts with suspicion, and the government has been sued several times by Japanese citizens over the textbook approval process. China, for its own part, is hardly notable for its open and honest historical dialogue, and Chinese school textbooks are written and approved by the government. Why then do they kick up such a fuss over something representing such a minority viewpoint within the Japanese education system?

The answer lies again in scoring domestic points. The Chinese media latches onto these stories and ties them into an ongoing narrative about Japanese militarism. This brings up the subject of war guilt and memory in conjunction with the education of youth in an idealized version of Japanese history. The Chinese government makes their formal protest, possibly without even the expectation of any action from the Japanese government, all in order to show their righteous defense of truth and dignity for the homeland. While these incidents are relatively minor individually, they continue to occur during each of MEXT's four-year screening cycles. The media portrayal of these events has left many Chinese with the perception that the controversial textbooks are the

majority texts used in Japanese schools.

At stake in this controversy is history itself. The history of the war is controversial and many wounds remain. China's demand at Level I is that Japan take action to address its historical legacy through education. This again thrusts Japanese domestic processes directly into the Level I limelight, MEXT's approval process becoming a matter of international affairs. Japan is again faced with accepting a loss of its maneuvering space in order to please a neighbor. There are many Japanese citizens who even support the changes that China has demanded of the textbooks, but the government has proven unwilling to cede too much in order to retain prestige and support from nationalist blocs.

In 1998 the two governments attempted to create a jointly-authored historical text.⁵ This committee has to date failed to produce a text, but such an effort seems like it would ultimately be a productive answer to some of China's objections. This sort of effort would allow Japan to participate in the academic process without ceding domestic control of education. The largest obstacle that remains is simply the creation of a jointly-accepted historical narrative.

While these incidents do not cause any major damage to Sino-Japanese relations in general, they play into the larger narrative of conflict as irritants and complications for other ongoing negotiations. One nation criticizing another in order to score domestic points is not uncommon or even unexpected in relations. Between China and Japan,

⁵ Hsiung, James C. "Periscoping the Future: Will China and Japan Ever Be Like France and Germany?" ed. James C. Hsiung, China and Japan at Odds. New York: Palgrave, 2007. 212-213

however, it can sometimes seem to be the primary game with no agreement actually sought or immediately possible. The Level I goal is gaining Level II support, to shore up a weakening coalition or maintain a nationalist narrative to a populace wearied by ongoing reform.

Conflict and Consideration

There is another, less-overtly vocalized frame in use by both nations. China and Japan are contesting each other for regional influence. Japan's "Lost Decade" has left them in a vulnerable position, and China's rapid rise has enabled China to exploit this. The Chinese leadership may be chained to maintaining rapid growth to keep the population contented with the current government, as few reform regimes last through their changes. Neither will expressly state the goal of achieving regional dominance, as this would immediately create conflict. It does, however, seem to be an implicit contest between the two. Historically, China has been the greatest regional power, and reclaiming pride of place could be a very strong motivation for the regime.

This level of conflict seems incongruous, given that bilateral trade has grown steadily almost every year since the normalization of relations in 1972.⁶ However, a large number of factors inhibit the development of smooth political relations at the national level. The phrase "Cold Politics, Hot Economy" has often been used to characterize the relationship between China and Japan.⁷ Despite the flourishing of intra-

⁶ Er, Lam Peng, Japan's Relations With China, London: Routledge, 2006. 5.

⁷ Suganuma, Unryu. "It Takes Two to Tango: The Conflict as Japan Sees It." Hsiung, James C. Ed. China and Japan at Odds, New York: Palgrave, 2007. 48.

regional trade, Japan and China are much more likely to see each other as threats to their respective security rather than as regional partners. This rivalry was perhaps brewing on the shared-historical back burner before the fall of the Soviet Union. The loss of a shared threat reduced the necessity of cooperation during China's rapid rise under Dengist reform and Japan's "Lost Decade."

China and Japan have a long history of contacts, many of them somewhat hostile. Still, it is only in the modern era that they have become rivals. China suffered considerable losses in the 19th and 20th centuries, and has only succeeded in creating substantial growth in the last thirty years. Japan grew exponentially before and after WWII, becoming a world power in record time. It is perhaps an accident of history that the classical roles of China and Japan are reversed, Japan now holding the upper hand. Recently, China has edged out Japan to become the 2nd largest world economy.⁸

For a nation of a billion people to have a powerful economy is not so strange, but the bilateral rivalry with its neighbor is bitter. Japan would like to retain its place as the main regional power. Giving in to all of China's demands would quickly destroy what remains of Japan's international prestige. The sense of insecurity among leaders in both nations reaches citizens indirectly. Meanwhile, the stirring of nationalistic sentiments, particularly in China, creates an unwillingness among domestic constituencies to accept elite compromises when they touch on issues of national pride.

Shared cultural history has done little to erase scars of the most recent war

⁸ Japan Times Online. "China edges Japan as No. 2 economy" 16 Aug. 2010.
<<http://search.japantimes.co.jp/mail/nb20100817a1.html>>

between the two states. While most of the participants in that war are now dead, dueling national mythologies of the conflict complicate any full resolution of the historical issues. Occasionally an analogy will be made about France and Germany's postwar reconciliation with regards to Japan and China. James C. Hsiung explores this theme, but ultimately rejects this hypothesis due to Japan's inadequate apology for the past, in contrast to Germany's more genuine repentance.⁹ As well, while Germany did conquer France, most of Germany's greatest war crimes were committed against the Jews, and so the Jewish people were the recipients of most reparations and apologies. Making analogies between different countries seems perpetually doomed to over-generalization of complicated issues, though in this case the comparison can be used to express the wish for a more complete resolution.

It is also noteworthy that Germany did not pay direct reparations to many countries involved in the war, but yielded industrial machinery and factories along with other German properties that had existed in those countries. Japan has long held that Japanese assets left in China should similarly cover many required reparations. This, combined with the bilateral agreement reached in 1972 that renounced reparations, left many Japanese government officials to conclude that the matter was settled. However, many of the psychological ramifications of wartime events have not been fully addressed, most especially the matter of the Comfort Women in China and elsewhere. Meanwhile, the use of ODA as a backhanded form of reparations has never been satisfactory to

⁹ Hsiung, James C. "Periscoping the Future: Will China and Japan Ever Be Like France and Germany?" ed. James C. Hsiung. China and Japan at Odds. New York: Palgrave, 2007. 193-221.

China.

Given the historical barriers, domestic political needs, and ideological frames used in relations between these nations, it is difficult to find a point where one side can give enough to satisfy the other. In particular, both sides have a difficult domestic game to play as well. Having staked out a hard-line position backed by popular fury, China will have difficulty proceeding without concessions from Japan. Meanwhile, the Japanese feel badgered by Chinese demands. Until recently, Japan was also more hampered by a domestic coalition that required strong support from nationalist groups. Recent moves by the cabinet of prime minister Kan Naoto have shed some hope on the situation, however. Abstaining from visiting the Yasukuni Shrine and making a war apology is a good first step. It has not been enough to break the deadlock after the later fishing trawler collision incident, but such gestures allow for some hope for greater reconciliation.

The contest for regional dominance complicates hopes for smoother relations. When China makes demands of Japan over Yasukuni or textbooks, they are asking for rectification of an injustice at one level. They are also demanding that Japan agree to their wishes in public, and modify internal state matters to the liking of a foreign power. It is impossible not to view such requests as compromising Japan's prestige, even when the cause is genuine and just. There are those on the Japanese side who view all such requests as an excuse for China to try and browbeat Japan as part of a larger plan to usurp regional power.

Viewed through this lens, the Level I game again holds incompatible win-sets, as

neither China nor Japan are going to willingly sacrifice their position. The intrusion of foreign demands into domestic affairs creates ill-will, even when requested with good cause. The questions of history loom large in Sino-Japanese relations, and their resolution is vital to genuine progress. However, it is difficult to find such a resolution when the historical questions become entangled with struggles for regional power and prestige.

Conclusion

Many of the contacts between Japan and China in recent years have been less than friendly. There are multiple levels of reasoning for why this is the case. The Level II domestic demands are visible in the Level I interactions between the nations. The domestic nationalism of China and Japan takes different forms, but has ultimately had similar effects in chilling relations and provoking international incidents. The leadership in both nations are concerned with regional position and power, as well. This concern is translated to the citizenship indirectly, and feeds into the nationalist currents that desire to protect the homeland.

The questions of history remain a stumbling block in Sino-Japanese relations, but they would not be such an obstacle if politically motivated historical construction were not at work in both nations. The textbook controversy explores this directly, down to selections of wording within Japanese texts. Chinese textbooks do not receive the same scrutiny, though they are created through a process even less transparent and open than the Japanese system. This seems somewhat hypocritical and casts a shadow of political

motivation over Chinese requests that Japan make amendments to their own educational system to suit Chinese needs.

War memories are not limited to the education of youth, of course. They come to play in the Yasukuni Shrine controversy and the attention paid to war dead from a violent time in Japan's history. There are legitimate concerns with the veneration of war criminals, and these are questions asked by Japanese citizens as well. The power of nationalists in Japanese discourse on the war colors the response that previous prime ministers have made to these questions, and will continue to do so. The construction of nationalism in China has colored the new expanding media, and affected the emerging civil discourse on Japan for the worse.

These sources of historical tension make other interactions such as trade negotiations or territorial resolutions difficult. The East China Sea and Diaoyu/Senkaku islands are the most notable example of this. The islands in particular have provoked a very strong nationalist response by citizens of both nations who do not wish their governments to “lose” territory, regardless of the actual legal status of the territory in question. The islands themselves are tiny and unimportant except for the way in which they affect resource rights in the East China Sea, and so both governments have cause to wish to retain them as well. Reining in the nationalists becomes difficult for the leadership then, lest they seem to be acknowledging claims of the other.

The intersection of dueling nationalist mythology and contested regional hegemony makes for a difficult time in international relations. Any forward progress

made in relations by these nations must be accompanied by reduction of nationalistic expressions that penalize leaders for compromising on issues.

The following chapters will help to explore and illuminate the origins and process of nationalism in both countries, as well as the historical basis of their relationship to each other. Chapter 2 goes directly into the history of Sino-Japanese relations, from antiquity into the present, and examines some of the incidents from the second Sino-Japanese War that have such a lingering impact today, as well as summarizing both national perspectives.. Chapters 3 through 5 go into the cases, starting with the East China Sea and moving through Yasukuni and the textbook controversy. Each will explain the history and context of the case within the larger pattern of relations. Chapter 6 concludes and will explore how the two-level framework shows the flow of interaction from domestic to international.

The relationship between China and Japan is pivotal for long-term regional stability in East Asia, and indeed for our increasingly interconnected world. For relations to be so effectively derailed by some of these incidents, clearly there is more at stake than the international interaction itself. The play of domestic politics upon leaders has a powerful effect on their international behavior. The forces at work in China and Japan are often fully opposed to each other, and this creates incompatible international goals between two countries who have the capability to be remarkable regional partners for each other.

Chapter 2: Historical Context

China and Japan are both very old civilizations with a long history of shared cultural contacts. There have been many instances of violence between them, but none terribly serious until the two Sino-Japanese Wars. These carried all the destructive power of modern warfare with intent to conquer and colonize on the part of the Japanese. Not all contacts between Japan and China have been hostile, however. For most of their history, China and Japan were able to coexist more or less peacefully. The overriding violence of the second Sino-Japanese War simply overpowered any other history between the two for decades, and continues to weigh heavily in international exchanges.

Pre-modern interactions between the two nations have relatively little bearing on modern forms of diplomacy, but it is useful to examine them briefly in order to show the continuity of relations, as well as infrequent conflicts. The regimes within both nations changed every few centuries, but the traditions of contact remained. Sometimes these took tributary forms in the case of Japan, sometimes not. Their relative isolation had allowed Japan an independence from China's guiding hand that some of China's other neighbors lacked.¹⁰

The general historical events marking Sino-Japanese relations will be recounted first. I will then examine each nation's interpretation of this history of contact along with current interests. This is to demonstrate the differing and sometimes wholly incompatible nature of historical narratives used.

¹⁰ Swope, Kenneth M. "Deceit, Disguise, and Dependence: China, Japan, and the Future of the Tributary System, 1592-1596." *The International History Review*. Vol. 24, No. 4 (Dec., 2002):773

The first recorded contacts occurred in around 100-300 CE. Some cultural sharing occurred during this period. Much of Japan's contact with China came through Korea as intermediaries, and this continued for many centuries.¹¹ Japan fought one battle with the Tang dynasty in 663, on the Korean peninsula, which did not lead to lingering hostilities. Trade was established in this early era, and allowed to continue peacefully until the Tokugawa restricted all such contacts in 1633.

Piracy became a problem in the coastal waters between China, Japan and Korea in the 13th century. These pirates were called *wako*, or “Japanese Pirates,” despite many of them originating on the Chinese mainland.¹² These pirates menaced the Chinese and Korean coastlines for centuries, provoking several diplomatic clashes between Japan and its neighbors. China and Korea urged Japan to do more to combat the piracy problem. There was never enough that could be done, but neither did the three states have the resources to “punish” the others militarily for failing to battle the pirates.

The Mongol Yuan dynasty of China made two attempts to conquer Japan, also in the 13th century. Kublai Khan twice attempted to invade, and twice was rebuffed. In both instances terrible sea weather destroyed much of the Mongol invasion fleets, a phenomenon the Japanese came to call the *kamikaze* or “Divine Wind.”¹³

Arguably the most important pre-modern incident involving Japan and China is probably the Korean invasion by Toyotomi Hideyoshi that lasted from 1592-1598. This

¹¹ Cohen, Warren I. East Asia at the Center: Four thousand years of engagement with the world. New York: Columbia University Press, 2000. 85.

¹² Ibid, 121.

¹³ McLain, James L. Japan: A Modern History. New York: W W Norton & Company, 2001. 15.

invasion did terrible damage to the Korean peninsula, and brought Japan into direct conflict with the full power of the Ming dynasty. The disorganization of the Ming court factions hampered their response, though they still succeeded in driving the Japanese off the continent. Ultimately, the invasion seems to be a result of Hideyoshi's limitless ambition, though there were trade benefits in Korean and Chinese goods that were sought by the Japanese lords.¹⁴

The Tokugawa era of Japan was highly isolationist, to the point of executing foreigners caught on Japanese soil. The Tokugawa were forced into allowing some foreign contact in 1853 by an American fleet led by Commodore Matthew Perry. This incident shocked the Japanese into a rapid spurt of modernization and contact with the outside world. Japan aimed to make itself an Imperial power, an equal to the nations of Europe. Europeans did not immediately credit Japan's activities, but the Japanese state was strong enough to make very rapid changes in industry and civil structure.

China, meanwhile, experienced vast upheaval from colonial intrusions upon its territory and domestic rebellions such as the Taiping that threatened to tear the state apart. The factions within the Chinese government struggled for power with each other over the issue of modernization, and movement to adapt was slowed by these disputes. China lost concession after concession to foreigners.

In 1895, the first Sino-Japanese war broke out over Korea. Japan and China both felt that the peninsula was vital to their national security interests. Japan won this war

¹⁴ Swope, Kenneth M. "Deceit, Disguise, and Dependence: China, Japan, and the Future of the Tributary System, 1592-1596." *The International History Review*, Vol. 24, No. 4 (Dec., 2002): 759-60

handily, and forced China into several concessions, including Korea's total independence from Chinese rule, as well as an enormous sum of war reparations. For Japan, this war demonstrated Japanese progress in modernization to the world, and moved them towards being regarded as a world power, holding territorial concessions in other nations. For China, it was a crushing defeat that further crippled the struggling dynastic government to rule effectively and enforced a humiliating concession to what had always previously been a lesser nation.

The worst was yet to come, however. Japan's aggression continued within the Asia-Pacific region, and Japan's rapid growth was sharply contrasted with China's struggle with civil war and famine. The axis of regional power had shifted to Japan after the Sino-Japanese and Russo-Japanese wars, and they worked tirelessly to enhance their position in world affairs. Japan joined with European powers in fighting against the Boxer rebellion, and demanding further concessions afterwards.

In 1915, Japan saw an opportunity to expand its sphere of influence in China, and sent an ultimatum in the form of the “Twenty-One Demands.” This was a list of concessions that Japan demanded from China, including expansion of Japanese control over areas of Shandong province, various mineral and railway rights, and an attempt to bar China from granting further rights to any other power than Japan. These were eventually revised down to thirteen, and accepted by Yuan Shikai. This ultimately sparked the anti-Imperialist May Fourth movement in China, along with a great deal of nationalism and anti-Japanese sentiment in China. The demands themselves gave Japan

more exclusive privilege in China, and directly contradicted the United States's Open Door policy.¹⁵

Japan's aggression in China aroused concern among other Western powers, but they limited their initial colonial efforts to Manchuria. In 1932, Japan created a puppet state known as Manchukuo. In 1937, they invaded China proper. This was the beginning of the Second Sino-Japanese war. Japan was engaged in a large number of colonial conflicts in east and southeast Asia during this time period, but their invasion of China was the single largest and most costly operation. The Japanese invasions were brutal, inflicting terrible civilian casualties. Most notable among the atrocities of Japanese troops was the Nanjing Massacre in which up to 300,000 civilians and prisoners of war were brutally killed.

The Japanese Comfort Women scandal is another wartime atrocity that remains largely unresolved. This is the documented use of native women in various countries as prostitutes for the Japanese Army. The victims experienced terrible shame, and did not come forward until some decades later. As well, the Japanese ran Unit 731, which was a biological and chemical weapons testing unit that performed human experimentation on an unknown number of victims. Unit 731 was pardoned for its actions by the US Occupation regime in return for all of its research data. This, too, is a lingering historical issue, particularly as leftover chemical munitions continue to cause occasional damage in

¹⁵ Cohen, Warren I. East Asia at the Center: Four thousand years of engagement with the world. New York: Columbia University Press, 2000. 316-18.

China.¹⁶

Japan's postwar government formed around conservative, anti-Communist elements after the end of the Occupation. This conservative takeover was sparked in part as a reaction against the Communist revolution in China, as the US immediately sought support from Japan as a bulwark against Communism in East Asia. China's Communist regime was subject to western "containment" policy which excluded China from normal diplomatic relations through the 50s and 60s. Trade relations resumed sluggishly prior to normalization.¹⁷

In 1972, Japan resumed normal relations with China. The 1972 Joint Communique included several points of agreement on normalization, including Japan's official recognition of the People's Republic of China as the sole legal government of China and the waiving of demands for war reparations by the Chinese government.¹⁸ This opened the door to increased trade and further expansion of bilateral ties. The 1970s also saw the origin of the East China Sea dispute, as initial survey work on those regions found evidence of oil and natural gas resources under the seabed.

The 1989 Tiananmen incident brought international censure down upon China from many countries, including Japan. However, Japan was one of the first to end sanctions and resume normal trade. Similarly, the 1996 Taiwan Strait Crisis caused a

¹⁶ Hsiung, James C. "Periscoping the Future: Will China and Japan Ever Be Like France and Germany?" ed. James C. Hsiung. *China and Japan at Odds*. New York: Palgrave, 2007. 201

¹⁷ Gordon, Andrew. *A Modern History of Japan: From Tokugawa Times to the Present*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003. 272.

¹⁸ MOFA. "Joint Communique of the Government of Japan and the Government of the People's Republic of China" <<http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/china/joint72.html>>

brief reduction in trade relations, as well as political backlash. It was also during the 80s and 90s that history issues began to enter Sino-Japanese relations, starting with the initial textbook controversy in 1982. Comfort Women began to come forward during this time period, and this and other wartime atrocities such as Unit 731 and the extent of the Nanjing Massacre were further verified with archival research.

In 1998, Jiang Zemin repeatedly demanded apologies from Japan during a state visit. Japan had just apologized to South Korea, but were unwilling to also apologize to China. These demands created a strong negative backlash in Japan and resulted in a cooling of relations.¹⁹ This was followed up three years later by Koizumi's promise to visit Yasukuni Shrine on August 15th. This provoked a strong reaction from China and other neighboring countries, eventually causing Koizumi to visit the shrine on the 13th of August as a compromise. Koizumi's repeated Shrine visits and generally hawkish attitude created a rift in Sino-Japanese relations, perhaps the worst since normalization.

After Koizumi, prime ministers Abe and Fukuda took some steps to repair relations. In 2009, the LDP was ousted in elections, and the DPJ was brought in, with their party platform that specifically included fostering strong relations with Asia. However, despite some attempts at mending fences, recent events such as the arrest of the fishing boat captain in September of this year have prevented strong reconciliation. The future of relations is highly uncertain, with each nation having to balance what it can give up in the name of friendship.

¹⁹ Suganuma, Unryu, "It Takes Two to Tango: The Conflict as Japan Sees It." ed. James C Hsiung. China and Japan at Odds. New York: Palgrave, 2007. 47.

Current Chinese Interests

In the Chinese case, the slow fading of Communist political practice has been matched by a reduction in the overt use of Communist ideology. This began after the Cultural Revolution and continued in the Reform Era under Deng Xiaoping. The party lost prestige from the Cultural Revolution. Deng's reforms met with stiff resistance from Chinese Communist Party (CCP) conservatives, and had frequent adverse effects in the lives of ordinary Chinese. The 1989 Tiananmen incident further damaged the party's standing among the people, and worsened factional infighting within the Center.

The de-emphasis on class struggle ideology left a void in which elites had few levers to manipulate the minds of the populace. Deng himself commented in 1994 that “I have told foreign guests that during the last 10 years our biggest mistake was made in the field of education, primarily in ideological and political education—not just of students but of the people in general. We did not tell them enough about the need for hard struggle, about what China was like in the old days and what kind of a country it was to become. That was a serious error on our part.”²⁰

The decline of Communism within China has been a gradual process versus the violent overthrows that occurred in other former-Communist nations. Many necessary changes have been made during this reform era, but has created a great deal of popular discontentment and disruption in the lives of citizens. One of the key responses of the government to this disillusionment has been the creation of a nationalistic narrative to

²⁰ Wang, Zheng. “National Humiliation, History Education, and the Politics of Historical Memory: Patriotic Education Campaign in China.” *International Studies Quarterly*. Vol. 52. No. 4. (2008): 788

unify and galvanize the populace. The use of “patriotic education campaigns” and other domestic measures to create loyalty has had some negative side effects, particularly on relations with Japan.

The dissemination of nationalism in China has an official top-down origin. The creation of a nationalist narrative began in the 1980s. It became a mass movement in the 1990s and found fertile ground among a populace eager for growth. Susan Shirk discusses the evolution of Chinese nationalism in China: Fragile Superpower. Shirk finds that the growth of patriotic expression as a replacement for Communist ideology helped to soothe popular discontent, while occasionally directing popular outrage at external targets, particularly Japan. The lives of regular Chinese have frequently been disrupted or adversely affected by reform measures, despite the explosive growth of China's economy.

This was coupled with insecurity on the part of the Chinese leadership, particularly in Jiang Zemin. Jiang Zemin used Japan as a scapegoat more frequently than his predecessors, but Shirk posits that Japan has long been a special target of nationalist resentment. There are several reasons for this, ranging from wartime offenses to the simple practical consideration that China cannot afford to offend the US too deeply, even if individual instances of anger or criticism erupt.

This nationalistic trend has created some hostile view of Sino-Japanese history among some Chinese citizens. The narrative constructed to replace Communism was one of national struggle and victimization rather than class struggle, as before. During Mao's

tenure, the Japanese citizens were victims like the Chinese, crushed by capitalist oppression. More recent historical portrayals have focused on Japanese victimization of China as the final stroke in a century of humiliations at the hands of foreigners. These portrayals were a part of enormous “patriotic education campaigns” that sought to increase the people's love and support for China, and their own struggle against the insults of the past.²¹ Though Chinese texts are careful to refer to “Japanese fascists” the distinction is not always so clear in the minds of the people, or the popular media.²²

This narrative has been drawn backwards, as well. The *wako* are interpreted as solely Japanese pirates despite evidence to the contrary. The invasion of Korea by Hideyoshi becomes an early expression of a natural Japanese aggression and precursor to the modern era. For Chinese nationalists, China has always been the center of culture in Asia. China has always given gifts of culture and technological advancement to Japan, and been repaid with aggression. Japan's current refusal to give China the apologies and reparations it demands are simply more offenses against China, while Japan's improvement of its defenses are signs of re-militarization for aggressive purposes. For China, Japan took advantage of a single moment of national weakness, along with several other nations. Within this narrative, it is stated that since China is growing strong again, Japan's behavior must improve.²³

²¹ Wang, Zheng. “National Humiliation, History Education, and the Politics of Historical Memory: Patriotic Education Campaign in China.” *International Studies Quarterly*. Vol. 52. No. 4. (2008): 790-91

²² Seo, Jungmin. “Politics of Memory in Korea and China: Remembering the Comfort Women and the Nanjing Massacre.” *New Political Science*. Vol. 30 No. 3 (2008): 384

²³ Chu, Yung-Deh Richard. “Historical and Contemporary Roots of Sino-Japanese Conflicts.” New York:

The Chinese media has taken this narrative of Japan and run with it. Stories about new outrages or scandals involving Japan are immediate opportunities for papers and websites to boost circulation. Popular sentiments are expressed more rapidly than ever through the internet and cellphone networks. Shirk even directly states that diplomats read the public internet debates, allowing it to set the agenda.²⁴

A Chinese scholar named Ma Licheng wrote an article in 2002 which called for a more balanced approach towards Japan. This created a firestorm of rebuttal at Ma, and also towards Japan itself. In the article, Ma quoted Long Yongtu, a Chinese WTO negotiator. Long stated that his greatest difficulty in negotiation came not from his foreign counterparts, but from domestic opinion that cursed him as a traitor for not immediately demanding that all of China's interests be met.²⁵ The WTO is a frequent target for citizen action groups in many countries, but in the Chinese case it was specifically the feeling that Long was not getting a good enough deal and therefore failing China.

There have been several other incidents involving Japanese citizens or companies and Chinese nationalist forces. The Chinese government was considering building a high-speed rail line from Beijing to Shanghai, a much-needed infrastructural improvement. A Japanese company pulled ahead in the bidding and might have won the contract, until an enormous internet petition and firestorm of protest caused the planners

Palgrave, 2007. 23-42.

²⁴ Shirk, Susan. China: Fragile Superpower: How China's Internal Politics Could Derail Its Peaceful Rise. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008. 157.

²⁵ Gries, Peter Hayes. China's "New Thinking" on Japan. *The China Quarterly*. 184 (2005): 837

to defer the contract decision indefinitely.²⁶ The Japanese UN Security Council bid created a protest petition that received twenty-two million signatures in China. While it is extremely unlikely that China would have backed Japan in any case, the visceral strength of that response made it virtually impossible to make any supportive gesture.

This new patriotically-centered narrative comes to a China whose robust growth hides a brewing instability. The leadership of China is all too aware of the precarious position they are in, and seek to create a cohesive nation without losing their position. This insecurity among leadership reaches citizens indirectly, and coupled with active patriotic education, it generates a strong national concern for China's prestige and strength in the world. The lives of ordinary Chinese citizens are often placed at risk by policies of reform mandated by the government, so this narrative of overcoming national oppression is an excellent means of containing resentment of official disruption.

The use of “othering” is the creation of an out-group to glorify an in-group. This is a tactic employed frequently in the development of nationalist myths, and can create strong feelings of solidarity among in-group members.²⁷ With an in-group the size of China (or, well, the urban Han at least) one has quite a base from which to work, and quite a monster of a mob to tame when something angers national passions.

In creating these elite-lead nationalistic myths, leaders in China sought to unify and pacify the populace against a common enemy, a hostile world that had hurt China

²⁶ Ibid, 844.

²⁷ He, Yinan. “Remembering and Forgetting the War: Elite Mythmaking, Mass Reaction, and Sino-Japanese Relations, 1950-2006.” *History and Memory*. Vol. 19 Iss. 2 (2007): 55

before, and would do so again. Their legitimacy was shifted from a “natural” class struggle, to defending China from these hostile forces. This began with the Communists' successful defense against the Japanese in the Second Sino-Japanese War, and continues through the modern day. The use of Japan as scapegoat came easily after the offenses of history. In presenting a strong front against modern instances of historical amnesia, the government seeks to portray that it will not compromise national interests to western powers.²⁸

However, stoking nationalist fires and creating the expectation of a “strong” leadership front can very easily backfire. China is painted into a corner in many of its negotiations with Japan. In order to retain political legitimacy at home, elites must remain firm in the face of Japanese statements on historical issues, and even in other arenas such as trade matters or territorial disputes. Failure to stand up to Japan can have negative impacts on a leader's career. Making strong statements against Japan rarely causes a leader direct harm, however. Japan can be quite useful for diverting attention away from difficult domestic issues—and China has a lot of difficult domestic issues.²⁹

The anger of a mob is nothing to toy with, however. Twice in the twentieth century, anti-Japanese protests have turned ultimately against the government. The May Fourth Movement and the Xi'an Incident of 1936 both emerged out of popular discontent with foreign policy into full-blown political resistance. Restraining modern incidents of

²⁸ Ibid, 56.

²⁹ Shirk, Susan. China: Fragile Superpower: How China's Internal Politics Could Derail Its Peaceful Rise. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008. 144.

anti-Japanese expression requires the government to tread carefully in order to retain its perceived legitimacy and strength. Thus, one often sees calls for a “rational and lawful patriotism” while expressing sympathy for the causes that lead to protests, such as a very recent protest over Japan's handling of the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute.³⁰

China's Japan policy then is a combination of national interest and actively fostered nationalistic sentiment. These nationalistic movements may be beyond the government's immediate control, despite the power of the state. Chinese leadership has let some of their own political legitimacy hinge upon their opposition to Japan based on historical issues. When Japan fails to concede to China's demands, they are committing yet another offense against China. For diplomats trying to negotiate, there is little room to give, creating an environment that leaves few options for successful negotiation.

Putnam argued that having domestic limitations on one's negotiating space allowed for better results, in order to have a successful negotiation of some kind. However, the corollary to that is that too many domestic constraints create an inoperable negotiating space, causing a failure to reach any agreement at all. China's domestic constraints when it comes to Japan are fierce.

The Japanese Perspective

Japan likewise faces some popular resistance to issues with China, most notably the issue of war apologies. The perception of most Japanese is that Japan has apologized enough and has been an exemplary international citizen for decades. Some ultra-

³⁰ Japan Times Online. “China calls for 'rational' patriotism.” 17 Oct. 2010.
<<http://search.japantimes.co.jp/mail/n20101017x3.html>>

nationalist elements of Japanese society deny many of the history issues entirely. These heavily nationalist blocs were a very loyal component of the LDP's support which the party could not easily afford to alienate. Negotiating executives are not unitary actors, but they do retain their own interests. One of these interests is keeping their domestic support coalition intact through the course of negotiations.³¹

This primarily impacts issues related to wartime history, and the wartime history issues are major points of contention with China. However, these Japanese nationalists share some characteristics with their Chinese brethren in not wanting Japan to lose territory or prestige, perhaps to China in particular. There is a feeling among even some moderate Japanese that China is using its historical demands to try and browbeat concessions from Japan as well, regardless of any validity of claims.

Japan tends to frame these encounters with an arrogant sort of impatience with Chinese demands. Japan has been facing a slow economic decline. China, meanwhile, continues on a path of enormous growth. The attitude of the Japanese negotiators under the LDP was product of several factors. They had to cater to the domestic coalition that refused to yield on important points of history, as well as a public sentiment that felt such matters were settled. There was also the feeling that continued Chinese insistence upon those matters was needless aggravation.

Japan's academic historical community is more robust and open than China's, and there is very serious argument over the interpretation of Japan's past. The Imperial

³¹ Putnam, Robert. "Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: the logic of two-level games." *International Organization* 42, No. 3 (1988): 458

legacy was one of immense destruction, but there are still factions within Japan that would see that war as a “liberation” of nations colonized or threatened by Europeans. Much of the “history offense” from Japan comes from this faction, where comments from nationalists on history are taken as representative. When China then demands that these statements or books be censored, Japan faces the internal resistance of the factions in question, and the intrusion of a foreign group within their domestic affairs. Japanese citizens are not eager to lose freedom of speech to China's demands.

There is a current within Japan's nationalist movements to make Japan a “normal nation,” a term that primarily refers to repealing Article 9 and allowing for regular deployment of Japanese troops for necessary operations. In this way, Japan would not be dependent upon US protection, but would be an equal power. This group favors the use of Japanese forces for peacekeeping operations, rather than simply refueling missions or similarly non-violent endeavors.³² China tends to see these movements and improvements to Japan's Self-Defense Forces as threatening signs of re-militarization.

Objections by the Japanese public to the deployment of the SDF in support of such missions remains incredibly high. Koizumi's decision to dispatch Japanese troops to the Gulf was opposed by two-thirds of citizens.³³ The Japanese public at large remains fairly committed to pacifist principles, and is unwilling to expand Japan's worldwide military role. This is a sharp contrast to how the Japanese people are portrayed within

³² Samuels, Richard J. *Securing Japan: Tokyo's Grand Strategy and the Future of Asia*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007. p 112.

³³ BBC, “Japan Backs Iraq Troops Dispatch,” <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/asia-pacific/3301093.stm> 9 Dec 2003. Accessed August 8 2010

China. Meanwhile, Chinese arms buildup is threatening to Japan, though China will not generally acknowledge this.

Unfortunately, anytime the Japanese update SDF systems, China reacts as though they were gearing for conquest. Japan feels threatened by China's growing regional and military power, and has reluctantly allowed itself a more realist role in foreign affairs. When Japan's requests for greater military transparency from China are denied, domestic forces question the utility of ODA to China.³⁴

There is a feeling within Japan that despite its current wealth, it remains a struggling and insecure nation. China's constant demands for apology have created a resistance among Japanese leadership to avoid seeming weak. This is the case with Koizumi, defiantly visiting the Yasukuni Shrine while in office.³⁵ Despite the tough-guy posturing of elites, economic activities between the two countries continue to boom. Below the national level, making ties city-to-city or prefecture-to-prefecture remains quite common, though Japan's citizenry have felt less affinity and less security with their Chinese neighbors as time has gone by.

Japan's sense of insecurity is transmitted variously to the public, and their affinity for China is negatively affected by Chinese statements to and about Japan. This erosion of affinity by Japanese citizens for China coincides with various historical scandals such as Tiananmen and the Taiwan Crisis of 1996. It is a worrisome trend, one that has shown

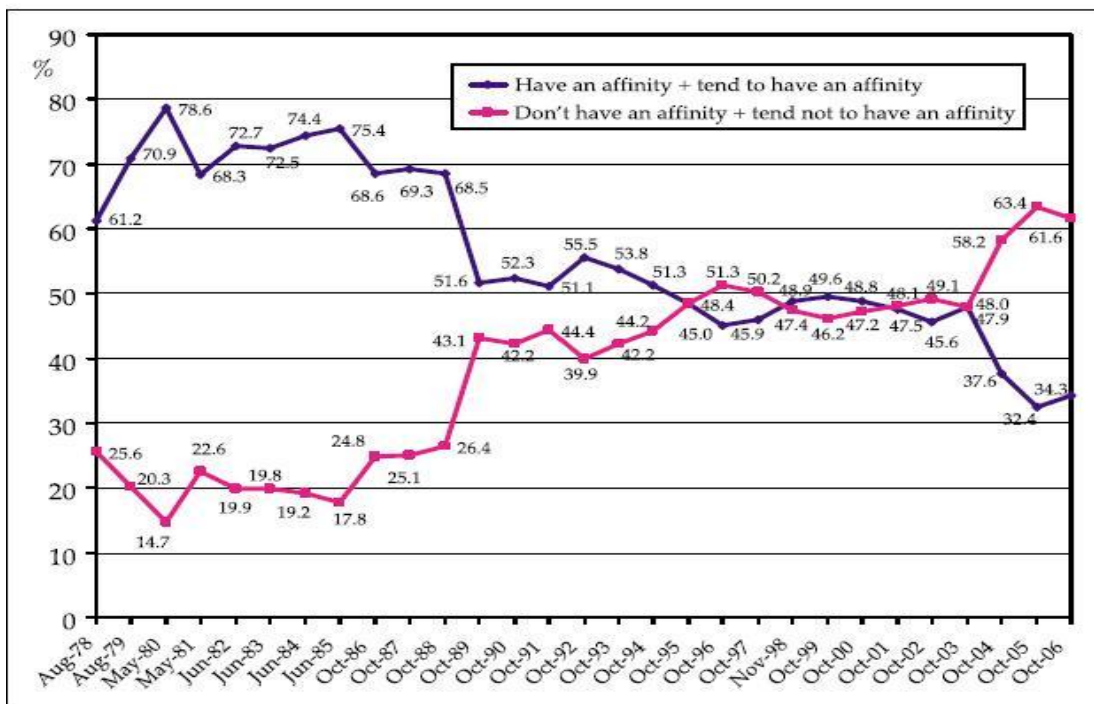
³⁴ Kōji, Murata "Domestic Sources of Japanese Policy towards China." Er, Lam Peng, ed. Japan's Relations With China. (London: Routledge, 2006) 37-49

³⁵ Sudo, Suelo, "It Takes Two to Tango: The Conflict as Japan Sees It," 43-58 China and Japan at Odds, (New York: Palgrave, 2007) p 52

little reversal since Koizumi's leaving office in 2006.

Though the recently-elected DPJ is not as beholden to nationalistic interests as the LDP was, they still must contend with their own domestic crisis and the strong Chinese diplomatic front that demands much and concedes little. Given the ongoing economic struggles, Japan has many reasons to look inwards.

Chart 1. Japanese Affinity Toward China (1978-2006)



Source: Cabinet Office, "Gaiko ni kansuru Yoron Chosa (Public Opinion Poll on Foreign Policy & Diplomacy)," annual.

Illustration 1: Japanese Affinity for China

Japan has a sense of its own national superiority, tarnished and faded by time. It is not unusual for nations to carry such feelings. When dealing with China, there is a lingering sense of victory, of Japan's greater status. China now contests this identity, and

acts threatening with their enormous military buildup and vociferous demands. The Japanese public still abhors the use of the military for combat missions, and cannot understand China's assertions of violence. Likewise, some Japanese express disdain at the apparent hypocrisy of a nation as repressive as China demanding apologies for WWII-era rights abuses that occurred before anyone currently involved in the debate was born.

Japan's security is threatened by a resurgent China, not just in simple military terms, but as a regional hegemon. Working with these issues separately is difficult, but maintaining a peaceful status quo is of utmost importance to the region, and to Japan itself. However, a nation may not appear too weak, and so saber rattling must be answered with a strong statement in kind. Japan's economic interests are deeply tied into China, but Japan cannot afford to cede important physical resources or hemorrhage international prestige in order to keep those same ties.

Japan's nationalists can not be completely ignored even by the DPJ, and many moderate Japanese share some limited sympathy for certain nationalist positions, such as keeping control of at least part of the East China Sea. Even while trying to turn towards China in policy, the recent trawler incident destroyed any positive impact that Kan was trying to make. In this situation where a prime minister must avoid looking weak to avoid a stern domestic backlash, and an opponent in much the same straits, it can be difficult to find a shared path.

Shared History, Shared Aggravation

Japan and China see each other as rivals more than allies in these modern times.

This is a direct result of the Second Sino-Japanese War. That conflict may be seventy years over, but the scars it wrought are slow to heal. As well, China's emerging nationalism wishes to reclaim China's central place in East Asia. Japan's national pride likewise does not wish to lose the position it has gained. The situation is most likely to be resolved peacefully in the end, but the argument that ensues is long and rocky. Neither side is planning on military adventurism against the other. They are both, however, planning to try and get as much undersea national gas as they can. Both are increasing military power for their own security with no intention to deploy it—a situation that can look frightening without context. They both have some very different interpretations of major historical events, and proper respect to be paid to those victims.

Chapter 3: East China Sea and the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands

The East China Sea dispute is over the maritime borders of a shallow sea that lies between China and Japan. The division of the East China Sea was not of any particular importance to either country until survey data in 1968 suggested the presence of extensive seabed natural gas and oil resources. The presence of these resources has created a situation in which conflicting principles of sea law are utilized by both nations to justify their claims.

Further complicating the border division are some islands, called *Diaoyu* in China and *Senkaku* in Japan. These islands are also claimed by both nations, in a dispute that actually goes back to the 19th century and the first Sino-Japanese war. The East China Sea contains important resources that both nations need to fuel their hungry economies. The islands are important territorial symbols, and may directly affect the borders drawn in the East China Sea. The islands are also a very powerful interest of nationalist groups in both China and Japan, and several times in recent history the actions of individual citizens upon the islands have created international incidents.

The historical background of this dispute informs legal strategies utilized by both nations to justify their claims over both the Sea and the islands. The validity of both claims will be examined with that historical context in mind, as well as via international law principles. Neither nation is willing to submit their arguments to international arbitration, so the legal arguments are largely a justification for national policy choices.

In addition to legal principles, there are Level II nationalist movements afoot.

Both China and Japan make territorial claims on the East China Sea and the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands. Irredentist citizen groups at Level II have latched onto the widest possible version of these claims, and pressure their governments to maintain these positions. Given the mineral resources involved, China and Japan have little reason to settle for less than they can legally justify at Level I. The relatively small area (particularly of the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands) has frequently allowed citizens to try and press their government's claims upon the islands through small group or even individual action. Level II Groups from both nations claim historical precedence over the other nation, as well as legal justification.

The flow of diplomatic and legal arguments to nationalist movements and back again is not always smooth, but the interactions of opinionated citizens and governments with interests to protect have a powerful impact on how this dispute has played out over time.

A Simple, Shallow Sea

The East China Sea is a shallow basin sea lying between China and Japan. Its maximum depth is less than 200m with the exception of the Okinawa Trough, which reaches depths of up to 3,000m. Historically, it has given rise to few direct conflicts. The *wako* pirates of the 13th and 14th centuries sailed on its waters, but they were suppressed in time, and were never large enough to create a war over their presence.

The 1982 Third Law of the Sea (LOS) Convention grants all nations 12 nautical miles of territorial waters, as well as a 200-nautical mile Exclusive Economic Zone



Illustration 2: Image source

<<http://www.japanprobe.com/2007/10/29/chinese-activists-try-to-invade-senkaku-islands/>> 20 Aug 2010

(EEZ) that extends beyond that.

The EEZ is not identical to a nation's territorial waters in that ships from other nations may enter it without permission, but nations have varying policies on what notification they receive, and many forbid certain cargoes from entering. This is

primarily related to contraband, but

also may apply to ships with dangerous cargoes (such as single-hulled oil tankers) and other substances that the EEZ-holding nation wishes to control. Nations reserve the right to board and inspect merchant shipping that passes through their EEZ.

In the case of the East China Sea, the 200-mile principle must be compromised because the Sea itself is less than 400 nautical miles wide at its widest point. This requires a boundary to be drawn according to separate sea law principles. In cases where there is an EEZ overlap due to facing coastlines, the individual nations must delineate their shared EEZ.³⁶

The sea law principles invoked by both nations to assert their boundary claims are conflicting. China prefers a “continental shelf” interpretation. This interpretation defines

³⁶ Hsiung, James C, “Sea Power, Law of the Sea, and a Sino-Japanese East China Sea “Resource War,” ed. James C. Hsiung. China and Japan at Odds, New York: Palgrave, 2007. 134.

a nation's EEZ as following the natural extension of the continental shelf. The continental shelf from China extends through ninety percent of the disputed area. The Okinawa Trough runs along part of the East China seabed, though it does not follow Japan's coastline closely. Under the “continental shelf” principle, China claims that the Okinawa Trough is proof of a *fundamental discontinuity*, that is to say a geographical separation of its continental shelf from Japan's, and justifies its EEZ claims on this basis.³⁷

This principle would allow China an EEZ that encloses ninety percent of the East China Sea and runs fairly closely to Japan's coastline, halting only at the Okinawa Trough. The continental shelf interpretation allows a 350-mile limit for “natural prolongation” beyond coastal boundaries. It would grant China sovereignty over all the disputed mineral resources, and unquestioned navigational primacy through the region, as shown in Illustration 1 above.

Japan utilizes an equally applicable principle of the LOS. Article 74 requires states to negotiate on the basis of international law to reach an equitable solution to territorial disputes. In the absence of mutual agreement, Japan made a unilateral designation of a median line in 1996, when they declared their EEZ. China rejects this median line on the grounds that it veers into Chinese territory, and also marks the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands as Japanese territory.

While these disputes over boundaries draw official diplomatic protests between China and Japan, they do not tend to generate the kinds of popular demonstrations that

³⁷ Ibid, 136.

the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands dispute does. For instance, when trade minister Shoichi Nakagawa compared China's Chunxiao field to a “sucking straw” that would absorb Japanese resources underground, he certainly offended some Chinese sensibilities.³⁸ However, there was nothing like the demonstrations that have greeted even casual statements about the islands dispute. Several rounds of talks have gone by without any useful consensus on the boundary issues themselves.

These two positions are wholly incompatible from a legal standpoint. One principle has to take precedence over the other. However, neither nation has been willing to submit their case to the International Court of Justice or any other entity to resolve the dispute, possibly out of a mistrust of third-party organizations, and also a fear of loss of the case. There is more at stake than that, however. Neither nation's leadership can afford to look weak in the area of losing territory—not in the East China Sea, or anywhere else. Nationalists in China and Japan both demand the largest possible claim be enforced, and they are very vocal with these positions. In addition to the fear of public reprisal, there are important strategic resources to consider in making any agreement with regards to the East China Sea.

Islands of No Man

The Diaoyu/Senkaku islands make few appearances in history prior to the origins of the current dispute in the 1970s. The islands are uninhabited and incapable of supporting either extended settlements or significant economic activity. They fall almost

³⁸ Hsiung, James C, “Sea Power, Law of the Sea, and a Sino-Japanese East China Sea “Resource War,” ed. James C. Hsiung. China and Japan at Odds, New York: Palgrave, 2007. 140.

perfectly equidistantly between the Sakishima islands and Taiwan. The islands were first discovered by the Ming Chinese, and given official names in 1403. Since that time they have been listed in Ming and Qing archival maps as part of China's coastal defenses, and referenced as navigational aids. This original ownership is the basis of China's primary territorial claim to the islands.³⁹

Japan claims that a Japanese businessman found the islands in 1884 as *terra nullius* or unclaimed land, and that Japan was the first to establish effective administration over the area. They state that the Okinawa prefectural government made several surveys of the islands and found no evidence of habitation or ownership by any nation, nor did they receive any protest from the Chinese government. The formal annexation occurred in 1895 when Japan erected territorial markers on the islands.⁴⁰

Japan uses “discovery” theory or the assertion of having found the islands in an unclaimed state without evidence of Chinese (or any other) administration in order to back their territorial claims. This is a valid principle in international law, though the assertion of *terra nullius* may not be valid due to China's existing records of the islands' ownership. *Terra nullius* requires a territory to have never been claimed, or for a state to have intentionally abandoned administration of a territory. Acquisition by prescription, meanwhile, is the creation of effective control over a territory that was not being administered but had not been abandoned. Prescription requires a longer period of

³⁹ Cheng, Chu-yuan. “Sino-Japanese Economic Relations: Interdependence and Conflict.” ed, James C. Hsiung. *China and Japan at Odds*. New York: Palgrave, 2007. 86.

⁴⁰ Blanchard, Jean-Marc F. “The US Role in the Sino-Japanese Dispute over the Diaoyu (Senkaku) Islands, 1945-1971.” *China Quarterly*. No. 95 (2000) 103.

effective occupation, and a lack of protest by the original owner.⁴¹ China did not make any protests over the administration of the islands from at least 1895 until the 1970s.

China has claimed since the 1970s that the islands were ceded to Japan as part of the Treaty of Shimonoseki that ended the first Sino-Japanese War. However, the treaty lists the territories of Fengtien (now Liaoning) province in China, Taiwan and its associated islands, and the Pescadores or Penghu islands as the territories ceded, but not the Diaoyu islands. The Penghu islands are much closer to Taiwan than the Diaoyu/Senkaku chain, and are also traditionally administered as a part of Taiwan. It is puzzling that Japan would specify the Penghu separately, but not the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands if the treaty covered those as well.⁴² It may be that China intends the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands to be counted among the “associated islands” of Taiwan, but the treaty does not truly seem to address these islands as a part of its territorial disposition. It seems likely that Japan simply felt confident in avoiding protest from China in timing their incorporation of the Diaoyu/Senkaku chain some months after the end of the first Sino-Japanese War, in 1895.

The Chinese claim from the Treaty of Shimonoseki follows then that the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands would have reverted back to Chinese administration along with Taiwan, Manchuria, and other territories taken during Japanese Imperial conquest. The Taiwanese likewise make the same claim, though they are not party to the LOS or any of

⁴¹ Malanczuk, Peter. *Akehurst's Modern Introduction to International Law*, 7th Revised Edition. New York: Routledge, 1997. 148-151.

⁴² Treaty of Shimonoseki <<http://www.taiwanbasic.com/treaties/Shimonoseki.htm>>

the other treaties involved.

China's basic claim is ancient sovereignty, and this is their strongest claim upon the islands. The justification through the Treaty of Shimonoseki did not arise until the 1970s when China began wanting the islands back, along with a sizeable chunk of the East China Sea. As this claim is fairly easily debunked, I feel that China is better off going with their claim of original administration. That is to say, China's historical records support their claim, and Japan's taking of the islands was aggressive, if not illegal in any strict sense.

The United States has also been involved in the disposition of the islands' sovereignty, though somewhat backhandedly. The Taiwanese attempted to claim the Ryukyu islands as a part of the territories to be reverted after WWII, but US was having none of that. The Ryukyu islands were far too strategic to US interests in the Pacific, though they also decided against simple annexation from Japan. The annexation would have proven costly, and the Ryukyu islands were subject to a strong Japanese claim as well as having a cultural connection with the Japanese state. This resulted in the US trusteeship of the Ryukyu islands, and included the Diaoyu/Senkaku chain as a part of that administration.

This administration included paying the descendant of the Japanese “discoverer” a yearly rent for the use of the islands as a shooting ground for the US Navy. In 1971, The Ryukyu reversion treaty explicitly returned the islands to Japan.⁴³ If the islands are in

⁴³ Blanchard, Jean-Marc F. “The US Role in the Sino-Japanese Dispute over the Diaoyu (Senkaku)

fact legitimately Chinese territory, the US cannot grant Japan sovereignty over them. However, the US acknowledgment of the Japanese claim strengthened the Japanese confidence in their own claim, and their willingness to assert this claim against possible Chinese aggression towards the islands.

The US-Japan Security Treaty also explicitly covered the islands until very recently. The Obama administration removed explicit reference to the islands in the Security Treaty, though they did not explicitly exclude the islands either.⁴⁴ The indirect omission was minor, stating that the treaty applied to territories under Japanese administration without mentioning the islands by name. This is a contrast to the position of previous US administrations, which directly invoked the islands. This maneuver seemed to be intended to soothe Beijing during the US financial crisis, and sent jitters through Tokyo. It seems likely that the US would still honor the treaty if military action were called for in the islands, but thankfully any such action has been a remote possibility.

The islands themselves are actually quite dismal little dots in the ocean. Their importance lies in whether or not they have a continental shelf and thus generate an EEZ for the controlling nation. China holds that the chain does not qualify for the status of “islands” under international law, and thus have no continental shelf, and therefore do not generate an EEZ. Instead, China utilizes the natural prolongation principle mentioned

Islands, 1945-1971.” *China Quarterly*. No. 95 (2000) 86.

⁴⁴ Japan Times Online. “US Fudges Security Pact Status” 17 Aug 2010
<<http://search.japantimes.co.jp/mail/nn20100817a1.html>>

previously to lay claim to the majority of the seabed and its resources.

Japan defines the Diaoyu/Senkaku features as islands, and thus claims that they have continental shelf and generate an EEZ. If the features are islands, they generate an EEZ, and the maritime borders of the East China Sea would be drastically altered. Article 121 of the LOS stipulates that “Rocks which cannot sustain human habitation or economic life of their own shall have no exclusive economic zone or continental shelf.” Japan claims that the islands are habitable, though no Japanese has attempted to live there on a full time basis since the early 20th century.⁴⁵ Given the paucity of resources on the islands, this claim seems difficult to accept as valid.

If the features are not islands, then it makes little sense for China to worry about them so, except to keep them out of Japanese hands. The islands have become symbols of national pride, however, in both nations. Japanese and Chinese nationalists protest in the streets over handling of incidents in the waters surrounding the islands. Irredentist groups have long tried to use the islands as levers to compel their own governments to protect national territorial interests as they perceive them.

Nationalism and Development

All this legal wrangling surrounding these tiny islands ultimately has to do with whether or not they can generate an EEZ into the East China Sea, particularly over contested oil and gas fields. This would grant a controlling interest over much of the sea as well, with valuable fishing rights and sea lane access. These are important national

⁴⁵ Valencia, Mark J. “The East China Sea Dispute: Context, Claims, Issues and Possible Solutions,” *Asian Perspective* Vol. 31, No.1. (2007) 154

interests, but the symbolic power of the islands lies more in their status as physical territory, however minor. Nationalist groups in China and Japan see the islands as powerful markers of national pride, and vigorously protest any possibility of their loss to a rival nation.

Japanese nationalist groups tend to whitewash the worst offenses of Japan's wartime history, and paint the Imperial military past as one of liberation for nations of East and Southeast Asia from western Imperialism. These groups tend to fall into the category that wants Japan to return to being a “normal nation,” or revising the Japanese constitution to revoke Article 9 and permit Japan to organize its own defense through a regular military force.

Beyond this, however, many are distrustful of the US-Japan Security Alliance, and feel that US protection of Japanese interests is unreliable at best, and destructive to Japanese prestige at worst. These groups want Japan to be strong enough to stand up to China and not need to rely on the US for its security. They seek to protect what they perceive as Japan's international prestige and territory.⁴⁶

The position of these groups is that the median line division of the East China Sea is the only valid division, and they see China's use of the natural prolongation principle as a sea access denial to Japan, as well as a resource grab. They also see Japan's acquisition of the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands as completely legal, particularly since China did not protest Japan's administration of the islands for seventy years. They push the Japanese

⁴⁶ Samuels, Richard J. Securing Japan: Tokyo's Grand Strategy and the Future of East Asia. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. 2007.

government to prosecute Chinese or Taiwanese protesters that enter the islands' territorial waters, and organize protests in Tokyo whenever China takes an action they see as compromising Japanese interests.

Chinese nationalism has a wider popular base than the Japanese version mentioned above, as the elite dissemination of a patriotic narrative of victimization has instilled a love of country, and a deep resentment of injuries from the past. The blossoming of the internet in China has given many citizens a new medium for the discussion of public affairs, though the state still monitors online interactions, and criticism is met with reprisal.

One area in which citizens are fairly free to speak their minds is in criticizing Japan, however, and even in criticizing the government for not taking enough action to protect China from perceived Japanese rapaciousness. The harping on Japanese victimization of China has left many Chinese feeling that Japan is in fact indebted to China for resources stolen and wrongs committed. This has created an aggrieved sense of entitlement in the general public towards Japan, and created the attitude that when there is a conflict of interest, Japan should give ground to China because of these historical wrongs.⁴⁷

The Chinese nationalist position is that the Japanese should yield the full continental shelf according to the natural prolongation principle, which is both legal and moral. China needs these energy resources for its security. In addition, the

⁴⁷ He, Yinan. "History, Chinese Nationalism, and the Emerging Sino-Japanese Conflict." *Journal of Contemporary China*.. Vol. 16 No. 50. (2007) 10.

Diaoyu/Senkaku islands were illegally stolen by the Japanese Fascists and must be returned to China as a redress of a historical wrong. Anytime Japan makes statements of its claim on the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands, protests erupt in Chinese cities. These are often non-violent, but they occur fairly frequently.

These nationalists in both nations have taken individual steps to try and force their governments to press these claims. Level II interests frequently lobby their governments in order to try and influence international agreements that might affect their interests, but in the case of the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands, pursuing these interests often takes the form of visiting the islands directly. This has the effect of forcing a response from their native government, but also forces a (negative) response from the opposing government in the dispute, creating a Level I incident.

1978 was the first major incident, when a Japanese nationalist group landed on the largest of the islands and constructed a lighthouse. They were there to protest the China-Japan Peace and Friendship Treaty, a post-normalization agreement on certain navigation and fishery rights, a dedication to peaceful coexistence, and affirmation of the One-China principle. The nationalists chose the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands to make their claim because China and Japan had both asserted sovereignty over the islands in the years leading up to the Peace and Friendship Treaty.

The nationalists were opposed to normalization with China, and also wished to compel the insertion of an “anti-hegemony” clause aimed at gaining some commitment from China against Soviet Russia. While they were unsuccessful in derailing

negotiations entirely, the anti-hegemony clause was included, and their exploits received much press. They departed the islands when they spotted armed “fishing junks” circling the area.⁴⁸

This is the first incident in which individual nationalists used the islands to gain the attention of and try to compel policy direction via the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands. China, Japan, and Taiwan had all made claims upon the islands since the 1968 survey that revealed the East China seabed resources. For these nationalists, asserting Japanese interests through the islands allowed them to send a clear message, and their government did not ignore it—the treaty received an additional clause—even if they did not achieve all of their policy goals.

Though these nationalists were taking a Level II action in trying to lobby the Japanese government through their efforts, they also affected Level I negotiations directly through their presence on the islands. This has been a frequent pattern of events related to the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands, in which Level II constituencies end up speaking directly to Level I concerns without the intermediary of a leader in formal negotiations. The islands are remote, but not so far out that they are not reachable by determined citizens with a message to deliver.

In 1990, another Japanese nationalist group attempted to repair the 1978 lighthouse, and the Japanese Maritime Safety Agency reported that they were going to recognize it as an official navigation marker. The Chinese Foreign Ministry protested

⁴⁸ Chung, Chien-Peng. “Resolving China's Island Disputes: A Two-Level Game Analysis.” *Journal of Chinese Political Science*. Vol. 12, No 1. (2007) 52.

that this would be a violation of China's sovereignty. The Japanese Maritime Safety Agency also repelled a boat of Taiwanese activists, which resulted in more protests from both the PRC and Taiwan.

The nationalists continued to press for recognition of their lighthouse as an official marker, but Japan elected to shelve the issue while still maintaining their claim, and stated they would move cautiously on recognition.⁴⁹ There is no evidence that the group was acting in any collusion with the government in their repair attempt, so perhaps the Maritime Safety Agency was simply taking advantage of the opportunity provided without full consideration to international implications. Once committed, the Japanese government could not simply back down to protest, and had to maintain its claim, even though the lighthouse remains unrecognized as a marker.

1996 saw one of the worst incidents of the dispute, undoubtedly influenced by tensions over Taiwan in the same year. This incident included the only fatality to occur in relation to the island dispute. Once again a Japanese nationalist group landed on the islands and attempted to construct another lighthouse. This created an enormous patriotic response from even non-mainland Chinese, including a 20,000 person march in San Francisco. A boatload of Hong Kong protesters was blocked by Japanese Coast Guard ships. One of the protesters attempted to swim to shore and drowned in the process. The governments, Japan and China both, tried to downplay the territorial issues, however. This was likely due to attempts to recover from the recent Taiwan Straits crisis, as well as

⁴⁹ Blanchard, Jean-Marc F. "The US Role in the Sino-Japanese Dispute over the Diaoyu (Senkaku) Islands, 1945-1971." *China Quarterly*. No. 95 (2000) 100.

the 50th anniversary of the end of the Second Sino-Japanese War.⁵⁰

The Japanese nationalists were following in the footsteps of their forebears in attempting to press Japanese interests through the medium of the islands, though their specific policy goals are unclear outside of “assert Japanese sovereignty.” 1996 was the year in which Japan declared its EEZ in the East China Sea, in addition to the larger Taiwan Straits crisis.

The response protests from China and Taiwan were likewise motivated by a patriotic desire to defend national territory. These activists managed to create an international incident that required their governments to respond. This caused problems for their administrations, but it is difficult for a government to chastise its citizens for trying to defend their own national territory.

Since Japan continues to administer the islands, the Japanese Coast Guard continues to occasionally expel fishing vessels from contested waters. In 2004, one group of Chinese protesters managed to land on the islands, the first landing since 1996, but were simply deported. Japanese nationalists made calls for their arrest and prosecution for illegal trespassing, but the Japanese government elected to smooth relations and returned them.⁵¹

Most recently, in September of 2010, a Chinese fishing trawler collided with two Japanese Coast Guard boats after refusing orders to leave contested waters around the

⁵⁰ Suganuma, Unryu, “The Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands: A Hotbed for a Hot War?” ed. James C. Hsiung. *China and Japan at Odds*. New York: Palgrave, 2007. 160.

⁵¹ Chung, Chien-Peng. “Resolving China's Island Disputes: A Two-Level Game Analysis.” *Journal of Chinese Political Science*. Vol. 12, No 1. (2007) 52.

islands. The captain and crew were arrested and the boat was impounded. The violence of this incident did not allow for a simple deportation as with the 2004 group, but the arrest generated immediate protest from the Chinese government and organized demonstrations by citizens within China. Japanese activists called for the vigorous prosecution of the skipper and crew. The Japanese government publicly mulled this option over, but elected to release first the crew and boat, then the trawler itself, in order to prevent further deterioration of relations.

The captain of the trawler, one Zhao Qixiong, is quoted as saying that the islands belong to China, and he is not afraid of the Japanese government.⁵² He returned home September 28th to a hero's welcome. Zhao's defiance of Japanese administration and willingness (along with his crew) to risk arrest bespeaks the extent of Chinese nationalism among the general public. A Coast Guard film of the incident of the arrest reportedly shows the trawler ramming two Coast Guard boats before attempting escape.⁵³

As a fisherman, he has a vested interest in the broadest possible fishing rights being available. However, such aggressive action towards Japanese authorities is troubling. The actions of this single boat have managed to create an enormous diplomatic row between China and Japan, as well as large protests in both nations. It is unclear that Zhao or his crew had any policy goal in their choice of actions, but the expressed nationalism of the skipper at least reveals personal motivation. The effect on the

⁵² Japan Times Online. "The islands belong to China: defiant Skipper." 28 Sept. 2010
<<http://search.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/nn20100928a4.html>>

⁵³ Japan Times Online. "Diet Panels view Senkaku run-in video, fault trawler." 2 Nov. 2010.
<<http://search.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/nn20101102a2.html>>

international relations of both governments has been enormous, resulting in the cancellation of high-level meetings at other conferences.

The wake of the trawler row is ongoing, and planned talks over development of the East China Sea were among those delayed. Thus far the two nations have not been able to reach any compromise on the issue of specific EEZ boundaries. China began surveying and drilling work on an oil field called Chunxiao which straddles the Japanese-drawn median line, in 2003. This drew immediate protest from Japan, which subsequently authorized drilling in an adjacent field in 2005, on its side of the median line.

The two fields have gone through various stages of production, though the actual status of the fields is unverified. Japan recently launched a seismic survey ship which might confirm drilling at the Chinese site.⁵⁴ In 2008, a “principled consensus” was reached to allow for joint development of a natural gas field, without any territorial concessions from either side. As recently as this year, that development plan has yet to be finalized.⁵⁵

The East China Sea EEZ does not create the same kinds of nationalistic protests as the islands dispute, but the islands would not be so important if they could not affect the disposition of the East China Sea. The actions of small groups of nationalists upon the islands have frequently disrupted work towards resolution of the larger East China

⁵⁴ Japan Times Online. “Seismic Ship could verify China drilling.” 23 Oct. 2010.
<<http://search.japantimes.co.jp/mail/nn20101023a2.html>>

⁵⁵ Japan Times Online. “Japan, China, agree to get cracking on gas-field pact.” 28 July 2010.
<<http://search.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/nn20100728a8.html>>

Sea dispute.

The People and Protest

Individual protesters reaching the islands brings the island dispute to the forefront as nations are tasked with defending their citizenry from foreign powers. If they punish the individuals involved, they are tacitly ceding to other nations' claims. Citizens wishing to press their nation's claim have the ability then, to force their government into a response that it may not desire. The negotiations at Level I are at times held hostage to the desires of domestic constituents such as Zhao Qixiong, a simple fishing captain. Greater leadership at the domestic level is necessary to preemptively persuade citizens against taking such actions, at least in the absence of a resolution of the dispute itself.

Unfortunately, the ability of nationalists to set the agenda for the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands sometimes seems to be aided or at least tacitly tolerated by national authorities. In the 1996 incident, Japanese protester boats were permitted to pass by Maritime Safety Agency patrols, but were later portrayed by the Foreign Ministry as private individuals acting on their own. Likewise, in 2003, Hong Kong protesters who were blocked from reaching the islands returned to a celebration organized by local officials.⁵⁶

The ongoing recent demonstrations in China against the Japanese handling of the trawler incident has been allowed to continue without police interference, except in instances when they turned violent. Even when the protesters vandalized Japanese-held properties, riot police halted only those instance of violence, without halting the protests

⁵⁶ Chung, Chien-Peng. "Resolving China's Island Disputes: A Two-Level Game Analysis." *Journal of Chinese Political Science*. Vol. 12, No 1. (2007) 54.

as a whole. Officials called for calm without enforcing it.⁵⁷ For China, a country which keeps a tight control on public order, the message seemed to be clear. Protest against Japan over the islands dispute was acceptable, and the interest of citizens in protecting the island claim was shared by the state.

Some of this governmental support during island incidents is clearly to placate or win approval from nationalist elements. Celebrating the return of protesters or “falsely arrested citizens” is a way to win approval from those who support those causes. Doing so creates less international outcry than bold statements by officials or official actions by naval vessels.

The rewarding of citizens for invading the islands is done by local governments, which have a great deal to gain from enhancing their immediate popularity. The lack of punishment for these same citizens or for violent protesters in China, is a means for the national government to support its patriotic narrative and support its legitimacy with the public. While overt acts of aggression by government agents could easily spiral out of control, citizens acting on their own is unlikely to create more than an incident. The Chinese government gains from citizens directing their anger outwards, away from its domestic policies, and so relatively controlled protests against Japan are unlikely to be met with any kind of serious crackdown response.

Both nations (and Taiwan) seem to have evaluated the possibility of direct military seizure of the islands and decided against it. Neither nation has sufficient

⁵⁷ Japan Times Online. “Thousands of Chinese hold rallies over islands dispute.” 17th Oct. 2010
<<http://search.japantimes.co.jp/mail/n20101017a1.html>>

military supremacy over the other to ensure victory, and the loss of economic ties would be vastly more costly than the military action itself. As well, it is difficult to predict how the situation would proceed with Japan's security alliance to the US. The situation could rapidly spiral out of control, creating a regional arms race at the very least.⁵⁸

Chien-Peng Chung recently wrote a two-level analysis of China's island disputes. In this writing, he contradicted Thomas Schelling's finding that “having one's hands tied” could be advantageous. That is to say, having obstructive domestic groups that make agreement more difficult can perversely allow a negotiator to seek a more advantageous outcome by risking no-agreement by citing the complete inability to reach domestic ratification with the inclusion of certain points. An example would be a US negotiator in a trade discussion presented with an agreement that includes limitations on American beef exports. This would be very unpopular with American beef producers, and they have a strong political lobby which could prevent ratification of the agreement with that clause. So, the negotiator will use the threat of failure of the agreement to have it removed, or otherwise pursue more favorable terms in the negotiation.

However, Chung asserts that in the case of the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute, the domestic preferences are for positions that are completely incompatible—the legal justifications of ownership for the islands are incompatible, and the domestic emphasis placed on ownership of the islands creates no compatible win-set. There are no points on which negotiators can compromise, no possibility of dual administration or division of

⁵⁸ Chung, Chien-Peng. “Resolving China's Island Disputes: A Two-Level Game Analysis.” *Journal of Chinese Political Science*. Vol. 12, No 1. (2007) 53.

the area. This incompatibility is further complicated by the modern transparency of negotiations, in which negotiators are subject to public scrutiny during the diplomatic process. The appearance of compromise on these island issues is too politically sensitive and visible, and so negotiations are reduced to a series of exchanged statements without much discussion.⁵⁹

I would argue that this applies to discussions of the East China Sea dispute as well, though such negotiations do not create as much public response as the island incidents do. Thusly there is the current “principled agreement” in place since 2008, which explicitly does not address issues of territorial claim while still attempting to finally tap into some of the resources under the seabed.

Two-level framework also acknowledges that when an agreement would compromise the interests of a small group within a nation but spread its benefits out over the nation as a whole, the small group will organize and lobby heavily to protect their interests. In the case of the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands, fishermen’s groups are strongly impacted by the threat of losing rights in areas around the islands. While there is no current agreement governing the waters around the islands, actions of fishermen such as Zhao Qixiong can be interpreted as part of this protection of interests. The Japanese Coast Guard has removed Taiwanese fishing vessels on several occasions, though without the creation of international incidents.⁶⁰ If the islands were to fall definitively into the hands of one nation or the other, the rights of fishermen from other nations could

⁵⁹ Ibid, 62.

⁶⁰ Ibid, 60.

be impacted.

Interests and Outcomes

China is a rapidly growing nation, and they have struggled to meet all of their energy needs even after the end of Containment. The world's petrochemical resources are frequently already tied up in longstanding agreements between nations other than China, and the concern of energy security is very real to a nation that was excluded from the mainstream of world economic affairs in living memory. The oil and gas fields of the East China Sea are quite important to the Chinese government as a strategic resource as a result of this. The Diaoyu/Senkaku islands are important for how they might shape the East China Sea's maritime borders, but they have gained great status as national symbols of China's struggle among the general public.

China's territorial integrity is a matter of great interest to Chinese nationalists, and irredentist claims of these groups include areas like Tibet as part of China's ancient, sacred territory. This same principle is applied to island disputes in which China is involved, even though the land areas involved are generally quite small. The historical narrative of victimization utilized in education and within portions of the media creates a sense of rivalry with Japan. This rivalry blossoms into deep popular resentment of Japanese refusals of Chinese claims on the East China Sea, and of the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands in particular. The Chinese government has crafted an image for itself as the righteous defender of the Chinese people from outside threats that previously damaged the nation, and the worst of these threats was Japan. For the government to fail to

aggressively pursue its claims in the East China Sea dispute would betray this narrative in popular consciousness.

Two-level theory predicts that a non-democratic regime will have an easier time presenting and enforcing an agreement since it can deny opposing interests the ability to organize against the adoption process. However, this has proven not to be the case with regards to issues involving Japan. The administration has permitted relatively free criticism of Japan where it might have clamped down on stories about the US in order to avoid offending US sensibilities too much.⁶¹ Public opinion has become a powerful force in Chinese politics, and Japan is one of the areas of strongest feeling.

Japan's government is more democratic, though the DPJ has shown little inclination to alter the policies set by the LDP. Indeed, during the recent fracas over the islands, Tokyo refused an offer of joint development from Beijing, stating that since the islands were Japanese territory, there was no reason for joint development.⁶² Japan has seen its fortunes wane in the last two decades, with a struggling economy that has required a number of painful reforms. While Japan has struggled to prop itself up, China has risen, phoenix-like, and continues to grow explosively. Japan is faced with the nerve-racking prospect of enormous Chinese regional power against which it must balance itself, with only the US-Japan Security Alliance at its back. Likewise, Japan has even fewer native energy reserves than China, and has been negatively affected by energy

⁶¹ Shirk, Susan. China: Fragile Superpower: How China's Internal Politics Could Derail its Peaceful Rise. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008. 99.

⁶² Japan Times Online. "Tokyo nixed joint Senkaku exploitation." 22 Oct 2010.
<<http://search.japantimes.co.jp/mail/nn20101022a1.html>>

embargoes in the past, so the East China Sea resources are a tempting security investment as well as valuable resource.

The Diaoyu/Senkaku islands likewise represent sea territories that Japan considers important. They are also an issue of dominance between Japan and China, and for Japan to simply give up the islands or moderate its claims (such as accepting a designation that the islands do not qualify for an EEZ) would be a loss of regional prestige against a sometimes-threatening neighbor.

The DPJ is not as dependent upon nationalist voters as the LDP is, as demonstrated by the promise of the Kan government not to visit the Yasukuni Shrine earlier this year. However, they still cannot afford to alienate the nationalist groups entirely. The Japanese bureaucratic structure ensures that many LDP supporters retain positions of considerable influence, and the DPJ's position in the Diet is far from certain. The Japanese public is not so easily inflamed by nationalist issues as China is currently, but those who feel strongly remain very politically active and influential.

For the moment, there seems to be little chance of a genuine resolution to the East China Sea dispute. The existing “principled agreement” to jointly exploit certain resources without comment to territorial claims is a positive step, but far from conclusive. China continues development of the Chunxiao field, and Japanese developments have been gaining momentum. These drilling zones may eventually push the East China Sea dispute to a more heated level, since the entire reason there was ever a dispute at all are those seabed resources. Compromise seems unlikely in the current political climate, and

the strategic nature of the energy resources means both nations have a very real stake in what they are able to retain.

The Diaoyu/Senkaku islands seem almost less likely to be resolved in the near future. Deng Xiaoping stated that the islands dispute should be left to posterity in 1978.⁶³ Some thirty years later, the squabble remains in full force. Leaders from both nations face difficulties in restraining the actions of nationalists seeking to assert their views on the island claims, due in part at least to the relative accessibility of the islands by small boat.

Neither government wishes to lose any domestic support, but the derailing of relations over the actions of individuals is inconvenient to say the least. Both Japan and China wish to avoid even unintentionally seeming to back the other's claims, which makes it difficult to discipline individuals involved in such escapades. However, for this dispute to ever see any resolution, it is necessary for leaders to set the agenda and address national attitudes about the islands to try and bring them to a calmer level, rather than allowing citizens to set the agenda themselves, seemingly at whim.

The issues of territory in the Diaoyu/Senkaku dispute are tied to the historical issues between Japan and China. The East China Sea has no historical conflict to magnify it, but it is embittered by the larger rivalry between the two nations. Building public support for any compromise will first require nationalist detachment from these issues, and that is a difficult thing to engineer. For the moment, the influence of

⁶³ Suganuma, Unryu, "The Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands: A Hotbed for a Hot War?" ed. James C. Hsiung. China and Japan at Odds. New York: Palgrave, 2007. 159.

nationalism on these issues prevents their resolution, or even negotiation in good faith rather than posturing for domestic constituencies. Military action seems unlikely due to the enormous costs of such operations, not just of the action itself, but the loss of trade. Therefore, it seems likely that both governments will protest and shelve, repeatedly, until a more favorable climate arrives in which an agreement might be formed.

Chapter 4: Yasukuni Shrine

Of all the historical issues that inflame the passions of Japan's neighbors, Yasukuni Shrine seems to be the single largest target. The stated purpose of the shrine is to honor Japan's war dead, those who died fighting on behalf of the Japanese Empire. To many Japanese, it is a place to pay respects to lost family members and others killed by war. To neighboring nations, it is a lingering symbol of Japan's Imperial past, and a memorial glorifying and idealizing Japan's behavior during the war. The historical issues for China include the devastation inflicted by the Japanese invasion during the Second Sino-Japanese War, as well as the perception of lingering and even resurgent Japanese militarism.

This chapter will examine the historical barriers that Yasukuni Shrine presents in Sino-Japanese relations, including the history of the shrine itself and the conflicted role it plays within Japanese society. There is certainly no single interpretation of the shrine within Japan, though there are very strong feelings about it on several sides. The political aspects of the shrine have direct effects on Japanese domestic politics, when leaders court the conservative vote, and on Sino-Japanese relations, when courting said vote angers neighbors.

Japanese domestic groups such as the War-bereaved Society provide enormous political capital to politicians who cater to their interests. In desiring shrine visits, the War-bereaved Society acts at Level II without interest in international impact. The Level I impact comes from international reaction to visits by top Japanese politicians to the

shrine. This is not a traditional Two-level meeting in which a treaty is on the table being discussed, but a negotiation in which a domestic event has triggered an international discussion. However, unlike with the Diaoyu/Senkaku incidents, it is the action of an executive that causes the incident, and so that executive must balance his Level II constituency against peace with the Level I neighbors.

Why do so many major Japanese public figures continue to visit or at least send offerings to the shrine? How powerful are the forces surrounding it, and what do they represent in Japanese politics? Why does the shrine incite such anger in Japan's neighbors? It is rare for a single place or symbolic gesture to hold such power in an international relationship. The shrine's unique status can lend some insight into major unresolved issues of war memory that remain open between China and Japan.

Sino-Japanese relations were very nearly brought to a halt between 2001 and 2005 by Koizumi's repeated visits to Yasukuni Shrine while in office. Koizumi needed the Level II political capital to be gained from visiting the shrine to push forward his domestic agenda, but it came at a tremendous Level I cost in relations with China and eventually Korea. These shrine visits, the motives behind them, and the effect that they have on Sino-Japanese relations are a revealing case study of conflicting policy objectives facing policymakers at the domestic and international levels. To examine why Koizumi's visitations were so contentious, a few words on the history and status of the shrine may be in order.

The Shrine Itself

Yasukuni Shrine houses roughly two and a half million souls. Not bodies; there are no human remains stored in Yasukuni Shrine, as with all Shinto shrines. It is intended to house the “honored war dead” who fought on the Japanese side during a number of conflicts, most notably the Second Sino-Japanese War that lead into Japan's participation in WWII.

The Yasukuni Shrine was first constructed in 1869 as a repository for dead of the Meiji revolutionary forces. Its buildings and grounds were expanded to incorporate more and more military dead from successive Imperial-era conflicts. With the creation and promulgation of state Shinto in Japan, it became a primary location of the Imperial creed. In 1946, the Allied Occupation declared a constitutional separation of church and state, and since that time Yasukuni has been a privately funded religious institution. Its major rites are still attended by thousands of worshipers—and protesters.

In order to become one of the “honored war dead,” a person had to die in battle or from wounds caused by battle while in honorable service to the Japanese military. Dishonorable discharges or those executed for crimes by the military were not supposed to be eligible. In practice, as long as the individual has not been court-martialed, they were considered eligible for enshrinement. This was a tactic to increase enshrinement and thus the number of people who were connected personally to Yasukuni.⁶⁴

The *kami* or spirit of the honored war dead would be symbolically invited into the

⁶⁴ Takenaka, Akiko. “Enshrinement Politics: War Dead and War Criminals at Yasukuni Shrine.” *JapanFocus*. 7 June 2007. <<http://www.japanfocus.org/-Akiko-TAKENAKA/2443>>

shrine and purified before being added to the collective *kami* of the shrine itself. The dead soldiers became vital spiritual resources of the nation, and reverence for their sacrifice became synonymous with reverence for the nation.⁶⁵ The Emperor made frequent visits to Yasukuni shrine during its heyday, and the Emperor's mourning for the fallen soldiers was an important part of the ritual of enshrinement prior to Occupation. This transformation of personal mourning into national mourning granted some consolation to the families who had faced losses.

Today, Yasukuni Shrine remains as a monument to these war dead. Interments at the shrine have continued sporadically into the modern day, as remains from the war continued to be found. The majority of war dead were actually enshrined after the end of WWII, though the rituals used were altered to remove the focus on unifying the Emperor with the military.⁶⁶ Each year, thousands of worshipers come to the shrine to pay their respects to lost relatives and friends from the war.

In 1875, the Meiji administration required that all war dead be interred at Yasukuni. During WWII, the shrine was a beacon of national mourning, and also a target of some popular anger against a nation that had taken so many young men off to death. Official enshrinement processions were increasingly met with accusations of murder from mourners. Even during wartime under very strict sedition laws, the police did not arrest these grieving protesters. Popular songs voiced very carefully-couched resistance

⁶⁵ Nelson, John. "Social Memory as Ritual Practice: Commemorating Spirits of the Military Dead at Yasukuni Shinto Shrine." *The Journal of Asian Studies*. Vol. 62. No. 2 (May 2003) 450.

⁶⁶ Takenaka, Akiko. "Enshrinement Politics: War Dead and War Criminals at Yasukuni Shrine." *JapanFocus* 7 June 2007. <<http://www.japanfocus.org/-Akiko-TAKENAKA/2443>>

to the enforcement of Yasukuni's central role.⁶⁷

Additionally, there are an estimated 20,000 Koreans and 20,000 Taiwanese enshrined at Yasukuni, individuals who were conscripted or whom even occasionally willingly joined the Japanese military to escape colonial racism. In 1978, a Taiwanese family demanded their son should be withdrawn from the registers at Yasukuni Shrine. Other families followed suit, and lawsuits against the Japanese government followed. Shrine officials have consistently refused all such requests, stating that the individuals were considered Japanese when they died, and do not cease being Japanese after their deaths, and could not be refused the honor earned by their sacrifice. To date, no names have been withdrawn.⁶⁸

Many names have been added, however. Unveiled documents have revealed a multitude of meetings between officials from the Japanese Ministry of Health and Yasukuni Shrine officials, in violation of constitutional principles. At these meetings, Ministry officials urged shrine officials to add convicted war criminals to the ranks of war dead. Their official opinion was that the war ended with Occupation in 1951, and so all of those who died serving the state during that time period should be enshrined. As time passed and the war seemed more distant, it became more acceptable to some parties to allow the enshrinement of these criminals, due to the feeling that they had all died in

⁶⁷ Nelson, John. "Social Memory as Ritual Practice: Commemorating Spirits of the Military Dead at Yasukuni Shinto Shrine." *The Journal of Asian Studies*. Vol. 62. No. 2 (May 2003): 452-453.

⁶⁸ Tetsuya Takashi. "Legacies of Empire: the Yasukuni Shrine Controversy." Yasukuni, the War Dead and the Struggle for Japan's Past. ed. John Breen. New York: Columbia University Press, 2008. 117-118.

the line of duty.⁶⁹

Class B and C war criminals began to be enshrined after 1958, quietly and without public fanfare. The shrine officials resisted enshrining Class A war criminals for over thirty years after the end of the war, however. This seems to have been the policy of the chief priest of Yasukuni until 1977, Tsukuba Fujimaro, and he was adamantly resistant to the enshrinement of these persons. His successor, Matasudaira Nagayoshi, immediately allowed the Class A criminals to be enshrined in 1978, though again without public fanfare.⁷⁰ When the media caught wind of this enshrinement, a scandal erupted. Many Japanese felt this measure was inappropriate.

The Showa Emperor visited the Yasukuni Shrine frequently prior to the enshrinement of the Class A criminals, and his cessation after that time was long a subject of public speculation. Published diary excerpts from officials close to him have since revealed that it was his anger at the Class A enshrinement that kept him from the shrine until his death in 1989.⁷¹

In addition to its ritual purposes, there is also a museum of Japanese Imperial military history operated on the shrine grounds. Called the Yūshūkan, this museum glorifies and sanitizes Japan's military past, omitting mention of atrocities and even defeat. Patriotic songs play softly in the background as visitors are greeted with displays telling the story of the glorious war of liberation from western powers in Asia. The

⁶⁹ Breen, John. "Introduction: A Yasukuni Genealogy." Yasukuni, the War Dead and the Struggle for Japan's Past. ed. John Breen. New York: Columbia University Press, 2008. 6-8.

⁷⁰ Ibid, 6-8.

⁷¹ Japan Times Online. "Hirohito visits to Yasukuni stopped over war criminals." 26 July 2006. <<http://search.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/nn20060721a1.html>>

emphasis is upon their heroic sacrifice, and the bond between family and nation—at no point are there mentions of suffering wrought by the forces represented in the museum.⁷²

This presentation of history is consistent with the most conservative views of Japan's military adventurism. Its existence is justified as “respecting the war dead” and honoring their sacrifices.⁷³ Coupled with the shrine's housing of Japanese soldiers, it adds considerably to the shrine's image as a monument to a wartime legacy that has not been fully addressed. The Yūshūkan was re-opened for the first time since the war in 1985, the same year as the Nanjing Massacre Memorial Museum in China, though this is a coincidental event.

The Class A enshrinement has been a serious point of contention in Japan since it occurred. Shrine officials have resisted any “state interference” in attempting to remove those names from the shrine registers, despite attempts even by such figures as Nakasone Yasuhiro, the conservative prime minister who made a point of visiting Yasukuni in the 1980s. Given that the shrine is a privately funded religious institution, there is little that the state can do without further breaching constitutional limits.⁷⁴

Despite these scandals and difficulties that have rocked the shrine and the nation, Yasukuni Shrine remains a poignant memorial to a large number of dead. There is Yasukuni, the memorial to the cruel excesses of Japan's Imperial era, the war machine that chewed up a large portion of East Asia. There is also Yasukuni, a shrine that houses

⁷² Nelson, John. “Social Memory as Ritual Practice: Commemorating Spirits of the Military Dead at Yasukuni Shinto Shrine.” *The Journal of Asian Studies*. Vol. 62. No. 2 (May, 2003): 454-455.

⁷³ Ibid, 456.

⁷⁴ Breen, John. “Introduction: A Yasukuni Genealogy.” Yasukuni, the War Dead and the Struggle for Japan's Past. ed. John Breen. New York: Columbia University Press, 2008. 8.

the *kami* of two million people, mostly young men coerced to fight at the behest of a state, tragically destroyed by war. This split perception is far from resolved in the Japanese consciousness, and the discussion of how to address Yasukuni's complicated legacy is ongoing.

Personal Grief, Political Gain

Since the Yasukuni Shrine was no longer able to receive state funding after 1946, it required private donors to fill the gap. Conveniently, the war had deprived a large number of families of young men who had been important in their lives. Sons and husbands were enshrined in large numbers—and their survivors formed a special interest group to lobby the government. This group is known as the War-bereaved Society (*izokukai*) and they are a powerful force in Japanese politics today.

The War-bereaved Society is composed of two primary groups: young widows who lost their government pensions after the war, and had few economic opportunities of their own, and older parents, especially fathers, who were unwilling to see their sons dishonored in defeat by branding the war as immoral.⁷⁵

For many of the families involved, seeing their loved ones cast as villains of the war would also implicate themselves. The suffering of the war widows allowed the War-bereaved Society to put a human face on grief and the destruction of war, and to focus on the narrative of victimization of the Japanese. Eventually, war veterans and disabled servicemen and their families would also be included among those seeking solace

⁷⁵ Seraphim, Franziska. War Memory and Social Politics in Japan, 1945-2006. Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2006. 61.

together.

The War-bereaved Society is at the forefront of Japanese efforts to preserve the legacy of the honored war dead. The deaths of young soldiers were a sacrifice for national pride and for regional peace. They contend that this pride is not being taught to modern youth, creating a depressed and listless cohort. The apathy of successive generations is taken as proof of the lack of this proper pride and energy.⁷⁶

As a part of this activism, the War-bereaved Society is closely connected to Yasukuni. The shrine literally would not be able to operate without their fundraising efforts.⁷⁷ They support the enshrinement and reverence given to their own relations, and correspondingly identify the sacrifice of those lost relations with the Japanese state and national pride. The focus on the narrative of Japan as a victim is paired with a narrative casting Japan as liberator from colonial oppression, rather than Japan as colonial invader in its own right. Even the Class A war criminals are exonerated in death as victims of national policy by some members.⁷⁸ However, the revelation of the Showa Emperor's disdain for visiting the shrine after the Class A enshrinement has pushed others in the War-bereaved Society to form a study group to analyze the possibility of their removal.⁷⁹

The political activities of the War-bereaved Society creates a large number of votes for candidates that they favor. Their organization and motivation as a political

⁷⁶ Ibid, 277.

⁷⁷ Breen, John. "Introduction: A Yasukuni Genealogy." Yasukuni, the War Dead and the Struggle for Japan's Past. ed. John Breen. New York: Columbia University Press, 2008. 5.

⁷⁸ Nelson, John. "Social Memory as Ritual Practice: Commemorating Spirits of the Military Dead at Yasukuni Shinto Shrine." *The Journal of Asian Studies*. Vol. 62. No. 2 (May, 2003): 454.

⁷⁹ Breen, John. "Introduction: A Yasukuni Genealogy." Yasukuni, the War Dead and the Struggle for Japan's Past. ed. John Breen. New York: Columbia University Press, 2008. 6.

force permits them a high level of influence on many politicians. As well, the membership of the War-bereaved Society has always included members of many influential families, and their president is always a distinguished public figure.

The War-bereaved act as a vital and reliable voting bloc for the LDP, for candidates that they favor. For many decades, this has brought them concessions they desired, such as various pension laws and official (“personal”) visits by prime ministers. After the enshrinement of Class A criminals the ministerial visitations became very controversial and largely ceased, with some notable exceptions. However, if a prime minister wishes to ensure their vote, they simply have to visit Yasukuni Shrine, especially around August 15th.

The influence of the War-bereaved Society is disproportionate to their numbers, both because of the influential nature of their membership, and because of their discipline as a vote-getting unit. They hold great influence with the LDP and with other conservative groups. Yasukuni Shrine is a conservative symbol to many groups in Japan, and the War-bereaved Society is simply the most historically-rooted and influential of these. For Japanese leadership in conservative factions (often LDP, but not always) there is no easier route to securing votes than courting those through the shrine.

Apologies Not Accepted

China and Korea have long demanded apologies from Japan for a long list of wartime atrocities. Japan has made apologies, though they have never been satisfactory to Japan's neighbors for a number of reasons, including lack of legislative acceptance by

the Diet, and the specifics of phrasing chosen by the apologizing officials. Apologies that are not rooted in legislative resolutions feel incomplete to China and Korea, as though they were words of the individual official rather than the genuine repentance of one nation to another. There is considerable resistance within Japanese politics to making these apologies. Some of this stems from movements which outright deny any historical wrongdoing, and others simply resist any motions which would cause Japan to look weak or lose prestige.

This has resulted in an unsuccessful end to well-intentioned legislation, such as prime minister Murayama's attempt at an apology resolution to be approved by the Diet in 1995. Murayama issued a statement in 1995 that is the most direct apology by a Japanese official, particularly a prime minister. There was also an attempt to draft a resolution of apology on the 50th anniversary of the defeat in WWII. However, it encountered stiff resistance from conservative groups such as the War-bereaved Society that opposed any such acknowledgment of failure and atrocity on the part of Japanese soldiers.

In addition, the Yūshūkan military museum on the Yasukuni grounds was redesigned in this year to more prominently glorify the “greatest sacrifices” made by Japanese during the war, such as kamikaze pilots. The presentation was altered to emphasize Japan's wartime role in Asia as a war of liberation from western powers with no mention of conquest.⁸⁰ These redesigned displays remain to the current day, despite

⁸⁰ Nelson, John. “Social Memory as Ritual Practice: Commemorating Spirits of the Military Dead at

protests over the content.

The failure of such measures always makes apologies issued by Japan seem hollow. The lack of direct compensatory action adds to this impression. Japan has given billions of dollars' worth in ODA since WWII, but this has never been explicitly expressed as wartime compensation, even when it was intended in that manner. Japan's neighboring nations often bear the scars of Japanese occupation without acknowledgment from the Japanese government.

For China, the Yasukuni Shrine represents Japanese militarism's greatest excesses, and pays homage to soldiers who raped and pillaged their way across a substantial portion of the Chinese countryside. The narrative of national humiliation chronicles China's suffering under a succession of outrages at the hands of foreigners, ending with Japan as the last and the worst of the outsiders who sought to bring China to its knees⁸¹. When Japanese leaders visit the shrine, it is opening these old wounds once again, injuries for which China feels Japan has never properly apologized.

The Chinese public is not overreacting to draw a connection between the Yasukuni Shrine and Japan's military past. It is a monument to that past. However, this viewpoint does not grasp the nuanced nature of the reaction of the Japanese public to the shrine. The Chinese media trades on sensationalism about Japan, and Yasukuni Shrine is no exception. Yasukuni Shrine occupies a close cognitive space with the Nanjing

Yasukuni Shinto Shrine.” *The Journal of Asian Studies*. Vol. 62. No. 2 (May, 2003): 454.

⁸¹ He, Yinan. “Remembering and Forgetting the War: Elite Mythmaking, Mass Reaction, and Sino-Japanese Relations 1950-2006.” *History and Memory*. Vol. 19 No. 2. (2007): 57.

Massacre and other Japanese wartime atrocities, since it is a monument to many of the soldiers who may have committed or even ordered those acts to be done.

In Sino-Japanese bilateral diplomacy, China takes an aggressive stance when it comes to official ministerial visits to Yasukuni Shrine. Lower level officials may visit, or make comments which arouse controversy, but they do not receive protests from the Chinese government, and with good reason. When the leader of the country visits Yasukuni, however, it becomes a more serious problem for Beijing. It seems much more like an official endorsement of the shrine and its contents. It has been China's stance since at least the presidency of Jiang Zemin that Japan still owes China official apologies and possibly compensation for wartime offenses.⁸² When Japan takes actions that seem to glorify or point back to its military past, China is immediately on guard.

A Question of Leadership

The 1978 enshrinement of the Class A war criminals created controversy primarily within Japan. Prime ministers visited Yasukuni frequently prior to the Class A enshrinement.⁸³ Ohira Masayoshi and Suzuki Kantaro also visited after the Class A enshrinement, in 1979 and 1982 respectively. However, it was Nakasone Yasuhiro's visit in 1985 that generated international attention. Nakasone visited the shrine and signed the guest register as "Prime Minister Nakasone Yasuhiro," along with bringing an offering of

⁸² Shirk, Susan. China: Fragile Superpower: How China's Internal Politics Could Derail its Peaceful Rise. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008. 164.

⁸³ Seraphim, Franziska. War Memory and Social Politics in Japan, 1945-2005. Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2006. 242.

flowers purchased with public funds.⁸⁴ This violated two articles of the Japanese constitution. Article 20 forbids the state and its organs from participating in religious activity. Article 89 forbids public support for religious institutions. This visit created a flurry of controversy in Japan for the prime minister's flouting of the law, and internationally, for seeming like official reverence for Class-A war criminals.

After Nakasone, only two prime ministers have visited the shrine. One of the leaders of the resistance to the Murayama apology was Hashimoto Ryūtarō, head of the LDP at the time, but also a former president of the War-bereaved Society. Hashimoto would go on to visit Yasukuni during his tenure as prime minister, though as it was very carefully managed as private worship and done on his birthday (July 29) rather than on or around August 15th, it did not create the major protest of other visits.⁸⁵

Koizumi is the only recent prime minister to make visits to the Yasukuni Shrine, and his repeated visitation basically brought Sino-Japanese relations to a halt for several years. Koizumi's choice to visit was motivated entirely by a need to shore up his domestic constituency. When China demanded repeatedly that he cease and apologize for shrine visitations, Koizumi continued to resist in order to bolster his image of toughness in the Japanese and world media. All of Koizumi's visits were presented as “personal” visits, and therefore not the business of state. This is a thin excuse and fooled no one as to the meaning of his presence at the shrine. It gained Koizumi the domestic

⁸⁴ Takenaka, Akiko. “Enshrinement Politics: War Dead and War Criminals at Yasukuni Shrine.” *JapanFocus* 7 June 2007. <<http://www.japanfocus.org/-Akiko-TAKENAKA/2443>>

⁸⁵ Seaton, Philip. “Pledge Fulfilled: Prime Minister Koizumi, Yasukuni and the Japanese Media.” *Yasukuni, the War Dead and the Struggle for Japan's Past*. ed. John Breen. New York: Columbia University Press, 2008. 165.

political capital that he needed, but brought many important issues with China to a complete halt until he had left office.

Why Koizumi persisted in Yasukuni Shrine visitations is a question that commentators have been asking repeatedly even since before the first visit. The initial cause seems to be that he wanted to shore up his electoral credibility among reliable ultra-nationalist bloc, which had previously favored his rival.⁸⁶ All politicians must have a stable domestic coalition before they can formulate any international negotiating strategies. However, the cost of Koizumi's domestic strategy was creating a deadlock with China that lasted for almost five years, and created a great deal of popular ill-will for Japan within the Chinese media.

Koizumi's Chinese counterpart in this time period was Jiang Zemin. Jiang was a compromise successor to Deng Xiaoping, and lacked confidence in his position. He chose a strategy of showing his strength in attacking Japan on the history issue. Jiang Zemin oversaw the implementation of the “patriotic education campaigns” that have had such an impact on popular Chinese attitudes toward Japan in 1994. The fiftieth anniversary of the victory over Japan in the Second Sino-Japanese War received enormous attention in 1995, an event which Jiang was able to capitalize upon heavily.

In 1998, Jiang Zemin made a state visit to Japan in which he repeatedly demanded a written apology from the Japanese government, even during a televised dinner with the Emperor. Jiang's forcefulness played very well on the domestic front, but it created a

⁸⁶ Takenaka, Akiko. “Enshrinement Politics: War Dead and War Criminals at Yasukuni Shrine.” *JapanFocus* 7 June 2007. <<http://www.japanfocus.org/-Akiko-TAKENAKA/2443>>

popular backlash against China in Japan.⁸⁷ While China tried to back away from the direct confrontational tone set by the 1998 visit, Koizumi's initial 2001 visit to the Yasukuni Shrine immediately required a harsh response.

Simply put, when Koizumi visited the shrine, it came across as a slap in the face to Chinese citizens who had been educated for years on the injuries inflicted by Japanese soldiers upon the Chinese people. The Yasukuni Shrine professes to be a monument of grief to those killed in the war, but it honors the Imperial wars through the Yūshūkan and venerates the Class A war criminals who orchestrated so much of this suffering. For many Chinese, it is a site of great anger that reached a boiling point when it seemed that the Japanese government was endorsing these negative aspects of the shrine through the visit of its top leader.

Jiang Zemin had helped orchestrate the education on the evils of Japan's past, and part of that narrative involved the heroic victory of the CCP (and KMT) against the invaders. A great deal of the Party's legitimacy was tied up in defending national honor from “western” interests that would again try to exploit and weaken the Chinese, and to right the wrongs of history. When Koizumi visited the shrine, all of these promises to the people had to be kept. National anger had to be appeased.

Very little progress seems to have been possible while both Jiang and Koizumi were in office. Hu Jintao succeeded Jiang Zemin in 2003, and while he had more confidence in his position, he still had to maintain some continuity with previous

⁸⁷ Shirk, Susan. *China: Fragile Superpower: How China's Internal Politics Could Derail its Peaceful Rise*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008. 166-167.

administration in order to retain support from Jiang's faction. Hu has operated with the goal of repairing relations with Japan, though until Koizumi left office, there was little that could be done. The shrine visits essentially prevented any high-level meetings between Japan and China.

Abe Shinzō succeeded Koizumi in 2006, and worked with the explicit goal of improving Sino-Japanese relations. He still sent offerings to Yasukuni, but did not present them himself. Abe and Hu were able to resume high-level summit meetings and repair some of the damage done to relations by the Yasukuni visits, not least because Abe himself never attended the shrine while he was prime minister.

Since Koizumi, no other prime ministers have visited the shrine, though some cabinet ministers have continued to do so. Kan Naoto of the DPJ worked with his entire cabinet and pledged not to visit Yasukuni Shrine in 2010, a gesture of goodwill that was unfortunately lost against the later trawler incident.⁸⁸ The DPJ is not as dependent upon nationalistic votes as the LDP, and part of the party's stated platform is reaching out to other Asian nations to cultivate closer relations.

Housing History

While visiting the Yasukuni Shrine is an entirely symbolic gesture, what it represents outside of Japan is far more negative than the conflicted representation within Japan. It is not possible for a prime minister to avoid the Level I concerns of other nations when they visit the shrine. Choosing to make a visit can create some powerful

⁸⁸ Japan Times Online. "Cabinet Skips Visit to Yasukuni." 15 Aug 2010.
<<http://search.japantimes.co.jp/mail/nn20100816a2.html>>

Level II domestic capital for a prime minister, but it comes at the very harsh cost of damaging relations with Japan's neighbors, particularly China. The Level I considerations do not take the form of a traditional treaty agreement, but these domestic pressures play directly into the sensitivities of Japan's neighbors, particularly China. China is then faced with its own Level II pressure to react, or lose legitimacy in the eyes of its citizens.

Japanese nationalists perpetually demand that prime ministers go boldly to the shrine, and honor the legacy of the war dead. The Chinese demand in this case, simply that prime ministers *not* go to Yasukuni shrine, seems fairly reasonable given the implications of the shrine controversy. This creates little in the way of a compatible win-set for a prime minister who is dependent upon Level II Japanese nationalists for vote-getting influence.

In one comment of rare candor in Japanese politics, a former governor noted that “There is no cheaper, more effective campaign strategy than to profess sympathy for and promote the interests of the Bereaved Families' Association.”⁸⁹ This kind of domestic support is difficult for a politician to ignore. It is possible for a prime minister to support the interests of the War-bereaved Society without going to Yasukuni Shrine, but the single most effective gesture they can make is a shrine visit. Trading a single afternoon for powerful electoral support is a tempting maneuver.

However, there are political costs to these visits even within Japan. There have

⁸⁹ Nelson, John. “Social Memory as Ritual Practice: Commemorating Spirits of the Military Dead at Yasukuni Shinto Shrine.” *The Journal of Asian Studies*. Vol. 62. No. 2 (May, 2003) : 458

been eleven separate court rulings about prime ministerial visits to Yasukuni shrine, several of them declaring the visits unconstitutional.⁹⁰ The public debate over the legacy and meaning of Yasukuni is visible in the “circus” every August 15th, with shrine supporters and protesters converging to express their views. This is in addition to the greater costs inflicted upon Sino-Japanese relations by choosing to cultivate this domestic constituency.

The Chinese public simply will not accept any prime ministerial visits to Yasukuni Shrine. The shrine's very existence is considered testament to Japan's ongoing militarism by some in China. For a leader to visit the shrine is a wholly unacceptable gesture, and represents a deep disrespect for the injury caused to China by Japan. For Level I Sino-Japanese relations to continue at all, it is necessary that prime ministers refrain from visiting the shrine while in office.

Recent revelations of the Emperor's disdain for the Class A enshrinements at Yasukuni has spurred motion even from the War-bereaved Society to encourage the removal of those individuals from the shrine. While some factions in Japan still reject the Occupation's war crime tribunals as valid, the removal of the Class A criminals would help to reduce the controversial nature of the shrine, and no longer seem to be honoring those who did the most to bring about such destruction. Shrine officials continue to resist any such move, and only time will tell if it will be possible.

Memories of the war remain a diplomatic obstacle for China and Japan, and

⁹⁰ Samuels, Richard J. Securing Japan: Tokyo's Grand Strategy and the Future of East Asia. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007. 114.

Yasukuni Shrine is quite possibly the single largest symbol of that conflict. The Yūshūkan can be paired against the Nanjing Massacre Memorial Museum in China, and together they present two vastly different versions of wartime events. Chinese leadership has played up their victory over the Japanese invaders as a means of gaining political legitimacy. One can track expansions of the Nanjing Museum to periods of sharp increase in Chinese nationalistic activity.⁹¹ Japanese nationalists remain a strong force in politics, meanwhile, and their narrative of the war whitewashes or glosses over the suffering of victims of Japan.

The issues of history between Japan and China are tied up in nationalist myths for both countries. China must aggressively seek to right the wrongs suffered by its people in the past, in order to maintain the narrative of national humiliation and struggle that helps to unify a diverse populace going through many painful systematic transitions. The LDP has struggled for some time to produce leadership which could unite enough political capital to make necessary reforms in a sagging economy. The recent DPJ government has been faced with many similar issues, and it remains to be seen if they can retain their grip on power. Playing to nationalistic voters has always been a reliable strategy in Japan, but it has the critical side effect of frequently damaging relations with Japan's neighbors.

For future progress, Japanese prime ministers must avoid visiting Yasukuni. This message seems to have been effectively transmitted after Koizumi. The added step of

⁹¹ Shirk, Susan. China: Fragile Superpower: How China's Internal Politics Could Derail its Peaceful Rise. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008. 165.

statements of intention to refrain from visiting such as Kan issued this year are a positive gesture as well, and hopefully that can be continued. Removing the Class A war criminals from the shrine would take away much of its current repugnance, though it remains to be seen if this can be done. In Sino-Japanese relations, Yasukuni Shrine is a destructive force in its current form, and avoiding it does little to create goodwill but can at least maintain the status quo and leave the path open for other progress.

Chapter 5: Textbook Controversy

War memory and its dissemination remain a powerful obstacle to Sino-Japanese relations, despite the distance of seventy years from the actual conflict. The obstacle is observable in the reactions to the Yasukuni Shrine, but for many Chinese, the shrine is simply the most visible manifestation of a vaster and more insidious web of evasion on the part of the Japanese government and the people with regards to acts of the past. This is present in the lack of officially expressed contrition by all levels of government, in remaining negative popular attitudes towards other Asian peoples, and in the periodic flareup of the so-called “textbook controversy.”

The term “textbook controversy” refers to an ongoing dispute that started in the early 1980s. The essence of the dispute lies in the process by which the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) authorizes all textbooks to be made available in schools. Frequently, MEXT has used this power to require alterations that soften or eliminates depictions of Japan in WWII. The Chinese government protests these depictions of events, and has gone so far as to demand that MEXT enforce specific changes in texts according to its specifications.

In this chapter I will examine the intersection of history, war memory, and international relations over the MEXT textbook screening process. In particular I will focus on the crises of 2001 and 2005, incidents which occurred during the greater Sino-Japanese relations crisis of the Koizumi years. Focusing on these years will allow for a greater contextualization of the larger historical issues that remain unresolved between

China and Japan, as well as the compounding effects of popular nationalism on international incidents.

The Level II domestic climate in these two years was heavily influenced by other international incidents which evoked a strong popular response, such as Kozumi's Yasukuni Shrine visit in 2001, and Japan's UN Security Council bid in 2005. While these disputes were being handled at Level I, domestic coalitions in both China and Japan organized to press for their interests as they perceived them—Japanese conservatives wanting their narratives to remain prominent, or to receive shrine visits, and Chinese nationalists wanting their government to protect their interests and perhaps to some degree, to punish Japan.

The creation of a historical narrative can fulfill many purposes, including the seeking of some level of factual truth, the building of popular loyalty and patriotism for the nation-state, or the critical examination of mistakes of the past. Japan's wartime history is still contested within the nation, and the legacy of those war years that will be handed down to children is a matter of public concern.

One group of nationalists in Japan decided to create a textbook intended to instill what they considered a more fitting national pride in Japanese youth, and which whitewashed Japan's wartime history. The Ministry's approval of this text provoked a protest from China and Korea, and those protests in turn created a backlash from Japanese citizens as unwelcome interference in Japan's domestic affairs. Examining the history and evolution of the Japanese textbooks and the international reaction they

received can help unravel some of the disagreements over historical narrative that drive Japan and China apart.

A Troubled Passage

After WWII, the Japanese government had to reassemble much of its organization. During the Occupation (1945-52), anyone convicted of war crimes or deemed overly supportive of the war effort was barred from the civil service. This changed after the Occupation, and many purged officials returned to power. There was (and is) a perception among some Japanese that the Occupation war crimes trials represented victor's justice, as American atrocities were not prosecuted, and so this return of purged individuals was appropriate.

The US government's shift in focus from being pro-democracy to anti-Communist furthered the entrenchment of conservative and nationalist elements in the Japanese government, since they most vehemently shared the goals of the US. This resulted in the Japanese Ministry of Education being taken over by nationalists who had no interest in addressing questions of wartime guilt or significantly shifting the Japanese historical narrative beyond what would survive US Occupation examination.⁹²

This conservative takeover in government has persisted to this day, though the modern LDP is quite different from the institution founded in 1955. MEXT has represented these conservative origins in its textbook screening process, resisting attempts to represent Japanese history in a critical light. Many of these alterations focus

⁹² Nozaki, Yoshiko. War Memory, Nationalism and Education in Postwar Japan, 1945-2007. London: Routledge, 2008. 2-4.

specifically on WWII-era atrocities by Japanese soldiers, such as the Nanjing Massacre and the Comfort Women scandal.

The screening process is performed by the Textbook Screening Council of MEXT, which is composed of regular employees of the Ministry. The specific historical criteria used is not defined, though MEXT has described its views as based upon objective facts, presented with minimal analysis in order to avoid what it terms “bias.”⁹³ The screening process is held every four years.

MEXT's screening process is not without criticism from within Japan itself. One of the primary critics was Ienaga Saburo, a teacher and history textbook author who was rejected by MEXT's screening process and responded by filing three different lawsuits against the government. Starting in 1965, he fought a decades-long battle that was taken up by many other liberal scholars and historians in defense of academic freedom and historical integrity.

At stake in Ienaga's battle was the very nature of what constituted history, and how methods and facts could or should be combined to create a narrative that was accessible to students. The government's position was stated as “objective” or “realist,” desiring that facts should be presented without any interpretation so that they could speak for themselves. However, when confronted with facts that contradicted the government's preferred position, they would very quickly revert to a relativist position, maintaining that

⁹³ Ibid, 95-97.

such things simply cannot be fully verified.⁹⁴ The state was unable to defend its own view of history, though the textbook screening process was allowed to continue.

The three lawsuits attacked the constitutionality of the screening process itself, as well as the specific level of discretionary power that MEXT should have in requesting changes to textbooks. Ienaga's legal battles attracted a large amount of intellectual and public attention as they progressed, and became something of a focal point for wider public debate over educational reform.

In the end, Ienaga lost the fight to have the textbook screening process declared unconstitutional as a form of censorship. However, Ienaga did win several points of contention in which MEXT was found to be in error and infringed on his freedom of speech. The results of his battles against the government have brought the debate over freedom of speech and proper historical narrative a much higher profile in Japan than it might otherwise have had.

Nozaki Yoshiko has examined the contents of the textbooks themselves. She found that the content of texts shifted significantly over time, with publishers themselves including more and more descriptions of Japanese atrocities, even with required editing, all through the 1980s and 1990s. More recent movements towards “self-censorship” on the part of publishers have been revealed to be the result of ongoing political coercion on the part of MEXT and the Office of the Prime Minister.⁹⁵ The DPJ has expressed a desire

⁹⁴ Ibid, 107.

⁹⁵ He, Yinan. “Remembering and Forgetting the War: Elite Mythmaking, Mass Reaction, and Sino-Japanese Relations, 1950-2006.” *History and Memory*. Vol. 19 Iss. 2 (2007). 63.

for greater historical reconciliation with Asian neighbors, though they have not put this into the screening practice in any visible way.⁹⁶

History Made

Japan's domestic textbook squabbles have extended far into the past, and will continue into the future. Other nations did not get involved in Japan's textbook screening process until 1982. In this year, the Japanese media broadcast the views of many protesters of the textbook approval process, alongside specific examples of changes that might alarm Japanese readers. The reported changes included the substitution of “advancement” for “aggression” in the texts, in reference to Japan's movement into China, minimization and softening of descriptions of the Nanjing Massacre that included avoidance of the word “atrocities,” descriptions of the murder of Okinawans by Japanese soldiers, as well as other controversial historical references.

Of these changes, the first, the substitution of “advancement” for “aggression,” had actually occurred much earlier in the 1960s and simply not reached the media before 1982. The media erroneously reported this as a change in the 1981 cycle. Japanese conservatives leaped upon this error and made it central to their critique of the media's reporting of events, citing it as representative of all the extant reports and attempting to discredit the controversy.⁹⁷

Other nations found these changes alarming as well, though they only became

⁹⁶ The Free Library Online. “DPJ drafts resolution urging review of history textbook issue.” 4 Oct. 2007. <<http://www.thefreelibrary.com/LEAD%3ADPJ+drafts+resolution+urging+review+of+history+textbook+issue-a0172103772>>

⁹⁷ Nozaki, Yoshiko. *War Memory, Nationalism and Education in Postwar Japan, 1945-2007*. London: Routledge, 2008. 137.

aware of the textbook screen controversy through reports in the Japanese media objecting to MEXT's actions. There was serious domestic debate within Japan over the appropriateness of particular changes and the screening process itself. The Japanese media reported a strengthening of the screening process and government controls over textbook content. However, this was the first time that news of these changes had reached overseas and brought back protest from abroad.⁹⁸

These international protests caused the cabinet secretary at the time to issue a statement of apology, as well as issuing a communique promising greater sensitivity to the injuries suffered by Asia at the hands of the Japanese military. There were public announcements made urging greater attention to the injuries inflicted by Japan in history, and promises to end particular Ministry-authored edits. Most notably, this included the infamous replacement of “aggression” with “advancement.” Korea was willing to accept these gestures, though China was less willing to simply take Japan's word that reform would occur.

Textbook authors reported little change in the process of screening, however. To be sure, some details that had previously been challenged were able to escape screening, such as victim figures over 200,000 for the Nanjing Massacre and descriptions of the massacre of Okinawans by Japanese forces.⁹⁹ However, the process as a whole was largely unchanged. The conservative forces in Japanese politics rallied, and Prime Minister Nakasone (noted previously for his visits to Yasukuni Shrine) entered office,

⁹⁸ Ibid, 80.

⁹⁹ Ibid, 81.

bringing with him a push for yet more rightist reform in government that prevented possibilities of textbook reform at that time.

At this time China was only beginning its reform agenda under Deng Xiaoping. Protests from China over the textbook issues originated after Japanese media sources reported upon the same problem. However, the complaints were over issues with portrayals of incidents that occurred in China, such as the aforementioned replacement of “aggression” with “advancement.” 1982 was the first time that the portrayal of history in Japan would be important to China, and then only because the Japanese media made it available. This initial international textbook controversy raised questions about war guilt that have remained largely unanswered to this day.

Japanese conservatives rallied after the 1982 controversy and protested China's intrusion into Japan's domestic affairs, feeling humiliated that the government would apologize.¹⁰⁰ They were unable to exercise much Level II influence on the handling of the 1982 incident, because they were unprepared for the international reaction that occurred. The 1982 incident was the genesis of a conservative movement to write a “new history textbook” that would represent events more to their satisfaction.

2001

In 2001, MEXT approved a new textbook. This was not unusual, as 2001 was a normal screening year. However, this text was a new edition of a textbook written by a Japanese nationalist group called the Japan Society for History Textbook Reform

¹⁰⁰ Ibid, 138.

(JSHTR). This text intentionally downplayed the Japanese atrocities of WWII and sought to instill a patriotic love of the nation in Japanese youth.

The JSHTR had been formed in 1996, and was the latest incarnation of attempts by conservatives to publish right-wing history texts since the 1980s. The formation was a direct response to the views of history expressed by former prime minister Murayama's failure to secure a Diet resolution apologizing to Asian peoples for wartime atrocities. Members included prominent academics and media figures. They accused the government and left-leaning publications of spreading “masochistic views” among young people.¹⁰¹

The textbook written by the JSHTR is a collection of Japanese conservative ideals, presenting such items as the Japanese war in East Asia being a war of liberation from western oppression, the Nanjing massacre as a footnote that states the issue is “under debate,” encouraging centrality of the emperor, and claims that Japan has lost its direction in the years after the war.¹⁰² The book is intended to encourage patriotic pride in Japanese youth, but it does so at the cost of critical examination of events and historical accuracy. Many Japanese historians and commentators have voiced criticism of the text's message.

The JSHTR's text received heavy criticism from academics, teachers, and even concerned parents. A member of the Textbook Screening Council of MEXT raised

¹⁰¹ He, Yinan. “Remembering and Forgetting the War: Elite Mythmaking, Mass Reaction, and Sino-Japanese Relations, 1950-2006.” *History and Memory*. Vol. 19 Iss. 2 (2007):63

¹⁰² Japanese Society for History Textbook Reform. “New History Textbook Chapters 4 & 5, 2005 version.” May 2005. <http://www.tsukurukai.com/05_rekisi_text/rekishi_English/English.pdf>

serious questions about the controversial content of the text, and discussed the possibility of rejection with other members. This was met with an immediate public backlash from conservative publications and commentators, reporting that the rejection of the text was being “engineered.” The council member was eventually transferred to a new position within MEXT. As well, the Chinese government began to voice protests over proposed drafts of the text. The LDP Secretary General implied that the screening process would be used to correct the text, but LDP hawks and JSHTTR members forced a retraction of those comments, indicating their political strength.¹⁰³

Finally, in spring 2001, MEXT approved a final version of the text. The Ministry indicated it would request no further revisions. The Chinese and South Korean governments immediately protested. The Chinese government went so far as to request changes to eight specific points in the text, a request that MEXT refused. The Chinese government persisted in insisting that Japan take serious and effective measures to correct this textbook issue.¹⁰⁴ MEXT's grounds for refusing the Chinese request was that it should not request further revisions after the text's approval, and that the local education boards were responsible for choosing which text to adopt. This strategy allowed MEXT to avoid responsibility for controlling the text and facing the wrath of the JSHTTR as well as trying to undermine the influence of teachers on the textbook adoption process by

¹⁰³ Nozaki, Yoshiko. War Memory, Nationalism and Education in Postwar Japan, 1945-2007. London: Routledge, 2008. 146

¹⁰⁴ Suganuma, Unryu. “It Takes Two to Tango: The Conflict as Japan Sees It.” Hsiung, James C. Ed. China and Japan at Odds, New York:Palgrave, 2007. 48.

favoring the education boards.¹⁰⁵

Several educational boards in Japan considered adopting the text, but met with enormous grassroots opposition from parents and teachers within the affected districts. In the end, only two educational boards selected the text for use. The Tokyo Metropolitan Education Board and the Ehime Prefectural Education Board both selected the text for use in a few schools and classes for disabled children. For both of these locales, board members who promoted the text owed their positions to governors sympathetic to the JSHTTR. A small number of private schools also adopted the text, bringing its total market share to 0.039 percent in 2002.¹⁰⁶

JSHTTR's goal had been to gain 10 percent market of share with their text, so this was a considerable failure of the group's stated goal, despite the political influence that allowed them to gain approval of their text in the first place. As a Level II coalition, they were able to successfully resist the influence of China on their approval process, even to the degree of fighting off official but non-binding comments made by political figures. But, as a simple domestic policy group they were not successful in achieving their ultimate goal. Their political influence was greater than their popular influence, even with such members as influential manga artist Kobayashi Yoshinori.

2001 also saw the first of several infamous Yasukuni Shrine visits by prime minister Koizumi. Koizumi had promised to visit the shrine in April during his bid for

¹⁰⁵ Nozaki, Yoshiko. War Memory, Nationalism and Education in Postwar Japan, 1945-2007. London: Routledge, 2008. 147

¹⁰⁶ Ibid, 148.

the LDP presidency and while the JSHTR's text was in the final stages of the approval process. China again protested, and after discussion, Koizumi agreed to make his visit in August 13th rather than the 15th. The issue of Yasukuni Shrine was more serious than the textbook issue in China's eyes due to its perceived glorification of Class A war criminals. However, the textbook controversy fed into the diplomatic response made by the Chinese government, and into popular reactions from Chinese citizens who observed the Japanese government, as it approved a nationalist text and then allowed their leader to visit the shrine.

The Yasukuni Shrine and the textbook controversy are linked because they both tie into Japan's wartime legacy. The textbook controversy frequently involves MEXT's requiring of changes to descriptions of WWII-era events involving Japan. This in turn would affect how a young person educated with such narratives would view the legacy represented by Yasukuni Shrine and its millions of war dead—whether they are sacrificial heroes or wartime oppressors and destroyers.

At Level I, China was not able to successfully prevent Koizumi from visiting the shrine, though they were able to influence the choice of date slightly. China was also unsuccessful in effecting changes in the JSHTR's textbook. Japanese conservatives and even less politically citizens saw this attempt as a gross overreach by China into Japanese domestic affairs, fueling anti-Chinese domestic sentiment. This Level II reaction certainly affected the Japanese government's response to refuse, though the refusal was also motivated by Japan's territorial pride. Accepting direct orders from China about how

it can educate its children is not something Japan can do and retain influence as a nation. The Chinese popular reaction was predictably fierce, with bloggers and other commentators condemning Japan's insensitivity and refusal to grapple with its war guilt.

Given the poor reception of the text by the public, one might think the textbook controversy would simply die down at that point. This was not to be the case, though it fell onto the back burner for several years. Fed by sensationalistic media, Chinese citizens carried a simmering resentment of Japan's altered depictions of history, resentments that resurfaced once again in 2005.

2005

The next regular textbook screening cycle took place in April of 2005. Once again JSHTR put an edition of their text through screening, and managed to receive approval. Once again, struggles erupted throughout the country over the adoption of the text. The 2005 JSHTR text was a revised and polished edition of the 2001 text, and contained much of the same objectionable content regarding Japan's political direction and descriptions of wars in Asia.

There was greater nationalist momentum within Japan in 2005, after a series of reports about the abduction of Japanese citizens to serve as Japanese teachers and translators in North Korea. However, domestic opposition remained strongly set against adoption of such a politicized text, and so the market share of the 2005 edition was only 0.39 percent.¹⁰⁷ This is a roughly tenfold increase from 2001, but still represents only

¹⁰⁷ Ibid, 149.

about 5,000 copies in use anywhere in Japan.

This was another sound defeat for the JSHTR on the domestic front, and their membership which had been in decline finally splintered, with some members going on to form yet another textbook reform society. The impact of the JSHTR's latest effort in China was much more profound, however, as violent anti-Japanese protests broke out in major Chinese cities, then rapidly spread via internet and SMS messaging through twenty-five other Chinese cities. These anti-Japanese demonstrations were terrifying in their scope and resulted in damage to a number of Japanese businesses in different cities.

The Chinese government had difficulty containing the demonstrations, not just due to the logistical problems of riot containment. The government faced difficulties in trying to ease the rage of protesters without enforcing a clampdown that would undermine government legitimacy.. They had already tried to black out news of the protests to prevent their spread, but technology had outpaced them in allowing protesters to communicate through alternate means.¹⁰⁸

The textbook approval was just the final straw in several Sino-Japanese incidents brewing in the same year. Koizumi refused to stop visiting the Yasukuni Shrine, though he would not make another visit until October. His refusal continued to anger Chinese citizens and the Chinese government continued to refuse any high-level meetings with Japan.

2005 also marked a high point in the Japanese government's ongoing efforts to

¹⁰⁸ Shirk, Susan. *China: Fragile Superpower: How China's Internal Politics Could Derail its Peaceful Rise*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008. 140.

secure a seat on the UN Security Council. Brazil, India and Germany were also seeking admission in an attempt to widen the Security Council. After initially cooperating with these countries, Japan eventually separated its bid and tried to vie for a Security Council seat alone, but was still frustrated in this attempt, particularly by China.

Japan's bid for a Security Council seat was met with an incredible nationalist reaction in China. It seemed like a blatant power grab to many citizens, and distrust of Japan boiled over into furious online and media discourse condemning Japan's evil actions of the past. Twenty-two million Chinese citizens signed a petition aimed at persuading the Chinese government to actively oppose the Japanese bid.¹⁰⁹ It was unlikely that China would ever have supported Japan's petition, but the Level II response made it completely impossible for Beijing to take any action but to vote against. Since Security Council additions must be unanimous, the bid was quashed.

This combination of events lead to an incredible level of anti-Japanese opposition from the Chinese people, who had been hearing negative stories of Japan's behavior for years. To have all of these events occur in a short time was certain to provoke some outrage, but the scale was unprecedented and frightening not just to Japan, but also seemingly to the Chinese government. Official protests were issued to the Japanese government over the textbook issue, though this time they did not go so far as to demand specific alterations. Citizens were the ones to press the case against biased Japanese textbooks.

¹⁰⁹ Kahn, Joseph. "If 22 Million Chinese Prevail at U.N., Japan Won't." *New York Times* 1 Apr. 2005: A4. 25 July 2010. *InfoTrac Newspapers*.

Within Japan, the nationalists had failed to secure the adoption of their textbook in schools, though the War-bereaved crowd still got their shrine visits, as much to thwart the objections of other nations as to support the war dead.¹¹⁰ The “normal nation” supporters also lost in their international ambition, the UN Security Council bid. Japan would have benefited tremendously from such an increase in international prestige, and so this failure was a serious blow to their goals.

Still, in every case, these Japanese nationalist groups at Level II were able to push their agendas forward with the Japanese government, in some cases very much in the face of international outrage and objection. To some degree this was simply a result of Koizumi's leadership, as he sought to manage his domestic agenda, when necessary at the expense of international diplomacy at Level I.

Chinese History

Why does China care so much about what history is learned by Japanese children? For texts that faced such opposition and limited adoption within Japan, the Chinese response seems somewhat out of step with the offense, such as it is. Riots in twenty-five cities quite the response to a book that sold 5,000 copies at its height.

As it happens, Chinese textbooks for children are not terribly balanced either. All textbooks for use in Chinese schools are written by the state—there is no private textbook market, approved or otherwise.¹¹¹ The content of Chinese textbooks shifts with the

¹¹⁰ Suganuma, Unryu, “It Takes Two to Tango: The Conflict as Japan Sees It.” Hsiung, James C. Ed. China and Japan at Odds, New York:Palgrave, 2007. 52-53.

¹¹¹ He, Yinan. “National mythmaking and the problems of history in Sino-Japanese relations.” Lam Peng

political wind as a result of this, and since the 1990s they have introduced steadily more material demonizing the “Japanese Fascists” for their actions in the Second Sino-Japanese War.

The narrative in these modern texts focuses on the victimization of China by foreign powers, especially Japan, and exonerates some previous devils of the pre-revolutionary days such as General Tso and even the KMT for their shared resistance against the Japanese.¹¹² These texts also fail to give much space to failures of the Communist regime. The Great Leap Forward is barely addressed, the Tiananmen Incident is not even mentioned, and China's invasion of Vietnam and border war with India are ignored.¹¹³

For China to fling accusations against Japan over textbooks while its own school system practices egregious revisionism at every turn seems hypocritical. Japanese citizens are not unaware of the content of these Chinese texts, and this has factored into the Japanese popular response to China's protests over the textbook controversy. Japan's wartime actions in China were tremendously destructive, though an argument can be made that the CCP regime did a pretty good job at destroying things as well.

The reason that China continues to harp on Japan's textbook approvals lies in the wartime history between the two nations, and possibly to score small diplomatic victories over Japan. The Chinese leadership is certainly aware of the parallel between Japan's

Er, ed. *Japan's Relations with China: Facing a Rising Power*. London: Routledge, 2006. 73.

¹¹² Wang, Zheng. “National Humiliation, History Education, and the Politics of Historical Memory: Patriotic Education Campaign in China.” *International Studies Quarterly*. Vol. 52. No. 4. (2008) 791.

¹¹³ Delaney, Michael and Michel Fitzpatrick. “China Plays Victim of History.” *Times educational Supplement*. 29 Apr. 2005.

textbook censorship and their own, but the narrative of national humiliation and patriotic struggle requires a Chinese response whenever that legacy of the past is extended through disavowals of atrocity.

In addition to this, there is a struggle between China and Japan for regional influence. Japan has struggled with economic slowdown while China has grown tremendously in recent years. This has left the two powers in competition for influence over their neighbors, and over regional institutions such as ASEAN. When China pushes Japan on history issues they can often force a retreat, though not generally a capitulation. Formal Level I protests from China have the effect of pushing China's influence on Japan, and play very well at Level II with popular nationalism, shoring up support for the regime.

Since 2005, there have been no further textbook controversy flareups. The JSHTTR has splintered after the 2005 text was unable to win public acceptance. A new group formed in its wake and announced its intention to seek approval for another edition of the text. The last screening cycle began in 2009 without any public outcry over submission by JSHTTR, and their website still announces the 2005 version. The low sales and harsh criticism of previous texts might have made it difficult to find a publisher.¹¹⁴ There have been no protests from Japan's neighbors. The future of the controversial text is uncertain.

Japanese textbooks not explicitly published under a political banner contain fewer

¹¹⁴ Nozaki, Yoshiko. War Memory, Nationalism and Education in Postwar Japan, 1945-2007. London: Routledge, 2008. 149.

references to Japanese atrocities now than they did in the 1990s. In January of 1999, as publishers were preparing texts for the next screening cycle, MEXT asked publishers to make their texts more “balanced” and reconsider their choices of authors. This was the beginning of the “self-censorship” movement by MEXT, which tried to get publishers to alter texts away from controversial descriptions themselves. This was done in order to avoid the negative reaction to MEXT's direct interference or requests for changes.¹¹⁵

MEXT's pressure on publishers to “self-censor” during the early years of the century seems to have been effective in rolling back some level of education about Japan's wartime past. However, with the change in government and the failure of nationalist texts to find traction, perhaps the pendulum will swing back again and permit greater examination of these past events.

It is difficult to truly refer to the textbook controversy as “resolved.” Even if Japan gave in to all of China's demands on one screening cycle, the next might bring an entirely new load of objectionable material. The latest cycle has passed without protest, however, which suggests some hope for years to come. 2010 has seen one of the most furious diplomatic incidents in years in the form of the trawler incident, and having the textbook controversy flare up again close to that time could only have added fuel to the fire.

Conservative groups remain powerful in Japanese politics, and their influence will continue to affect Sino-Japanese relations. Level II maneuvers like the JSHTTR's textbook

¹¹⁵ Ibid, 144-145.

may not be intended to influence relations directly, but it is a common thread among Japanese nationalist groups to desire Japan to be strong and internationally respected. Resisting demands from China and other neighbors is a part of this perception. At Level I, Japan cannot allow China to control what the nation will teach its children. This is a gross breach of Japanese sovereignty, and wholly intolerable to domestic coalitions—in other words, even if the government drafted an agreement, it would never be ratified.

The Chinese government, meanwhile, feels it must protest each occasion when Japan fails to grapple with its wartime legacy. This is a maneuver that enhances Chinese influence by provoking Japan, but it is also required by nationalists at Level II in order to maintain the government's role as national defender. Jiang Zemin's successors have tried to soften some of the rhetoric about Japan in both government and popular media, but a good scapegoat is a hard thing to give up. As well, Japan really has not addressed portions of its wartime legacy, though the utility of international pressure to force such examination is questionable.

If the JSHTR is unable to bring another edition of its text to market in the near term, it may be possible for the controversy to slip quietly into memory on its own. The Japanese textbook market is ultimately a Japanese matter, and how the nation chooses to express its history will remain a subject of interest for the future.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

Koizumi is often blamed for bringing Sino-Japanese relations to their lowest point since 1972 with a few simple strokes. He made deliberate choices that alienated the Chinese in order to bolster his domestic standing (most notably his choice to go to Yasukuni Shrine), moves he considered necessary to look tough in response to Chinese demands and preserve his conservative standing while he tried to implement a complicated slate of reforms. Still, he did not create the fragile conditions that allowed a symbolic gesture to create such damage.

The ultra-nationalist domestic faction in Japan is still strong, though the change of government has altered their fortunes. Even during the reign of the LDP, they were unable to completely dominate Japanese politics or cultural discourse. Nevertheless, they are a factor within international relations, and occasionally take actions which require the government to intervene or react, such as building lighthouses on the Senkaku Islands. When confronted with the dilemma of supporting their reckless private citizens or pleasing and conceding to China, Japan has thus far generally chosen the former. The current government's choice to avoid the Yasukuni Shrine is a positive step in the arena of Sino-Japanese relations, a move taken over conservative objections.

The Chinese government has huge problems of its own, many of them having nothing to do with Japan. The use of nationalism as a solution to some of those problems has proven to be a double-edged sword, however. The ideology of Communism was no longer useful. Something else had to warm the people's hearts towards the CCP and the

pain of reform. Nationalism and a narrative of victimization at the hands of foreign powers provided a compelling rallying point, especially in the disillusioned wake of Tiananmen. For China, the use of patriotism has been very successful in giving populist movements new targets to focus their anger upon. That one of these targets is Japan could be seen as simply an unfortunate side effect.

This sense of historical injustice has created a situation in which the Chinese polity cannot accept many compromises with Japan. While Chinese government officials do not have to struggle for re-election in the manner of democratic societies, there is very real populist pressure upon leaders, and the internet allows commentary and opinion formation in almost real time. Young citizens enraged by China's treatment in history demand action from their leaders. Beijing is left with few opportunities to negotiate when historical issues with Japan are in play.

The stability of the domestic coalition must come first, before any international agreement can be reached. For leaders insecure in their position, this can mean that no possibility of agreement exists while they remain in office. Leaders are not unitary actors, able to make policies in a vacuum, but they will place their own political interests first inasmuch as they can weave these in with the interests of the nation. It was far more important to Jiang Zemin to try and shore up his personal position by lashing out at Japan than to try and strengthen bilateral ties. It was far more important for Koizumi to secure the support of the War-bereaved Society for his domestic suite of reforms than to try and draw China closer.

To some degree, this strategy is rational. International trade between China and Japan has grown steadily with only the very slightest of ripples during the 1996 Taiwan Straits crisis, allowing the nations to reap the benefits of contact with each other despite the lack of warm political relations. Leaders have managed to reap great domestic political benefits for their agendas by maintaining this rivalrous tone without disrupting the vital flow of trade.

The diplomatic roadblocks represented by the three cases in this thesis are serious, though only the East China Sea dispute involves physical territory. This conflict over resource division is complicated by historical grievances involving claims on the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands. Two-level game theory as expressed by Putnam tends to assume that Level II concerns which have an impact on Level I negotiations will normally be expressed solely through domestic channels, such as lobbying efforts directed at a legislative body or protests staged within the home nation. In the case of the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands, domestic actors can force confrontations at Level I through individual action, such as the case of Zhao Qixiong, the fishing trawler captain who created an enormous diplomatic row through his decision to fish near the contested islands.

Citizens who go to the islands to protest are speaking directly to Level I concerns, without going through normal channels of international communication assumed by Two-level theory. This additional dimension of communication makes it difficult for both governments to exercise full leadership over the situation, as their efforts can be short-

circuited at virtually any time. The political forces that support each nation's claims on the islands have very strong views about the rightness of their positions, and so are willing to risk individual action to try and push for a favorable outcome. However, each time this occurs, tension is raised considerably between China and Japan.

Some joint development plans exist for the resources in the East China Sea, but China's drilling of the Chunxiao field may force a confrontation before those can come to fruition. The row over the fishing trawler caused yet another cancellation of high-level talks between China and Japan, with China stating that Japan had “ruined the atmosphere” for any discussion, amidst anti-Japanese demonstrations that continued to break out in China.¹¹⁶

Working out territorial disputes is always made more difficult when meetings are canceled due to inclement history. Koizumi's Yasukuni visits caused a great rift in Sino-Japanese relations, and prevented any progress on many issues for several years. Initially, Koizumi visited the Yasukuni Shrine to win the favor of the War-bereaved Society, but this rapidly turned into a position of resistance to foreign pressure as China and Korea continued their protests to his visitations.

The Yasukuni Shrine is a curious monument, at once solemn in its grief for young lives lost to war, and seeming to edify the individuals and institutions that created the suffering of war in the first place. This conflicted presentation makes Yasukuni an uncertain presence even in Japanese consciousness, with protesters speaking out against

¹¹⁶ Japan Times Online. “China: Wen will not meet Kan in Hanoi.” 30 Oct. 2010.
<<http://search.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/nn20101030a1.html>>

the shrine even as thousands flock to worship there.

For the Chinese, the shrine represents the worst elements of Japan's Imperial war legacy. The enshrinement of the Class A war criminals and the Yūshūkan museum exist on the same grounds to glorify Japan's military past. Ordinary citizens visiting Yasukuni Shrine to grieve for loved ones is not enough to provoke Chinese anger, however. That is reserved for when leaders in government visit the shrine. Then, it seems to be an official validation of all the shrine's flaws and official sanction to a dark past.

The barrier of history between China and Japan solidifies as China protests Japan's insensitive action, and Japan resists China's interference in what it terms internal matters. Level I is an incompatible win-set, with China demanding no visits and Japan asserting its right to visit. The impetus to visit the shrine on Koizumi's side came from Level II concerns, primarily groups such as the War-bereaved Society, whose political influence was vital to his agenda. On the Chinese side, citizens are keenly aware of the viciousness of wartime atrocities visited upon China by Japan, and want Japan to address this legacy squarely in apology. Failing that, they want Japan not to disrespect the memories of victims of the war by glorifying vicious deeds, and the Chinese leadership has woven a narrative in which they are the sole defenders of Chinese dignity and pride.

The Yasukuni Shrine's major controversial point remains its enshrinement of Class A war criminals. While the War-bereaved Society has never considered advocating the removal of these tablets solely to appease the sensibilities of other nations, they have formed a study group to give the matter consideration after the revelation that the Showa

Emperor had avoided the shrine after 1978 until his death because of the Class A presence. Shrine officials continue to resist the dis-enshrinement of these individuals, but their removal might lessen the international historical affront at Yasukuni Shrine. Renovation of the Yūshūkan would further reduce Yasukuni's association with militaristic values in Japan, though there is far less pressure to enact changes in the museum.

Lacking such changes, however, the shrine remains a lightning rod of controversy when government officials patronize it, and is a crisis almost waiting to happen the next time a leader comes along in need of the domestic capital that the War-bereaved can provide. The LDP, currently out of power, may be driven farther into the arms of their staunchest supporters in order to restore their coalition. This has not occurred yet, and the DPJ government has avoided the shrine.

There is no easy solution to the Yasukuni Shrine issue beyond saying “prime ministers and other government officials should not visit.” Certainly, the lesson of the Koizumi years has impressed itself on successive prime ministers to avoid visiting, though the shrine's existence remains a sore point for some Chinese observers.

This battle over historical legacy has found another focus in the last three decades as Japan's textbook screening process has come under repeated domestic and international criticism for de facto censorship of controversial topics in history. In 2001, the approval of a right-wing textbook came alongside Koizumi's initial promise and visit to Yasukuni shrine, drawing a strong protest from China that included demands for

specific changes to the text in question. Japan refused these demands as too intrusive to their domestic affairs. The text met with considerable domestic criticism as well and was adopted by less than one percent of school districts.

In 2005, a new edition of the right-wing text was adopted. This time, massive protests broke out in many Chinese cities as Japan made an unsuccessful bid for a seat on the UN Security Council, and Koizumi refused to cease visiting the Yasukuni Shrine. The scale of these protests was unprecedented, and modern technology allowed organizers to spread the demonstration even around an official news blackout.

The conservative group that drafted the text was acting solely on domestic concerns, wishing to instill what they felt to be a proper sense of national pride in young people and push the conservative Japanese agenda. However, this agenda comes at the price of whitewashing Japan's Imperial past, describing the Second Sino-Japanese War as a war of liberation from western oppression and denying events such the Nanjing Massacre and the Comfort Women scandal. These beliefs run roughshod over the sensibilities of nations that were victimized by Japan, including China. Once China and other nations protested, this group and others added their pressure to the government at Level II to resist the intrusion of foreign powers into how Japan would teach its children.

The incredible response of the Chinese people in 2005 put considerable pressure on the Chinese government to formulate a strong response. The ratification of the mob is perhaps the final stage of approval for any agreement, formal or informal. In the case of the textbook controversy, there was no agreement made—Level I again had no

compatible win-set. Japan would not let China direct its educational policies in even small ways. China, meanwhile, was unlikely to ever support Japan's UN Security Council bid, but enormous Level II response against Japan prevented any such possibility. This is another case in which “tied hands” created no advantage for Beijing, as they gained nothing diplomatically with Japan but had to quell considerable unrest at home.

The JSHTR's textbook has fallen out of public view since 2005, and this leaves the textbook controversy unresolved but perhaps hopeful. The Ministry's screening cycle is every four years, and the latest year for the right-wing text would have been 2009. Lacking any protest for that, it seems likely that some obstacle prevented submission or approval, allowing a respite at the very least. Where Japanese dialogue on textbook content will end up is difficult to predict. The battle for historical memory in the Japanese consciousness is not over, and likely never will be.

The influence of nationalism is very visible in all three of these cases. Nationalist goals in Japan may be pursued without attention to the Level I implications of their actions, such as in the textbook controversy or initial Yasukuni Shrine visit. However, once international protest is triggered, conservative response is often uniformly stubborn, demanding that their government refuse to submit to international pressure. This stubbornness is rooted in a desire for Japan to be a strong nation, an influential nation. The term “normal nation” is often used as a catch-all phrase for discussion of military re-armament of Japan in the vein of such strengthening. This kind of discussion must nearly

always include suggestions to repeal Article 9, or the “peace clause” of the Japanese constitution.

Such discussion always raises the suspicions of Japan's neighbors who keenly remember the ravages of Japanese soldiers in WWII. The fear of Japanese militarism in the region remains strong even decades after the war. A Japanese newspaper poll in 1995 asked respondents if they ever thought Japan would be a military power again. Seventy-four percent of Japanese respondents answered that they did not think Japan would ever become a military power again, with just 18 percent saying that it may become one. In contrast, 56 percent of Korean respondents felt that Japan may become a military power again, and 26 percent felt that it already was. Chinese respondents were about fifty-fifty on whether Japan would again become a military power.¹¹⁷ This is fifteen year old data, and Chinese perceptions of Japanese militarism have very likely increased in the interim.

This gulf of perception can only lead to misunderstanding. When Japan increases SDF capabilities, China frequently interprets this as a threat to itself as a result of such attitudes towards Japan. Chinese nationalistic beliefs that originate in the patriotic educational narratives disseminated by the state focus on Japanese militarism as one of the great evils of the 20th century. When Japanese officials seem to pay homage to Japan's military legacy through Yasukuni Shrine, the Chinese are offended, but also worried. Likewise, when the Japanese educational system seems to fail in what the Chinese perceive as the Japanese duty to face the legacy of the Second Sino-Japanese

¹¹⁷ Ikenberry, G. John and Michael Mastandano. International Relations Theory and the Asia-Pacific. New York: Columbia University Press, 2003. 11-12.

War. This barrier of history impedes the creation of trust between the two regimes, and communication has been slowed or nearly halted more than once by historical issues.

This historical barrier creates troubling implications for security. The suspicion of each nation's military buildup feeds paranoia. The hostility that China heaps upon Japan whenever the history issues are raised drives Japanese conservatives and sometimes even moderates into a defensive position which in turn feeds into Chinese nationalist condemnations of irresponsible Japanese treatment of history. This cycle is toxic, and difficult to bring to a halt.

The East China Sea dispute creates the greatest security concerns, given the openness of the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands to determined individuals. The most serious international incidents involving the islands have all been the result of private citizens taking matters into their own hands, with tension-raising results. Additionally, Chinese incursions by both research and military vessels into the Diaoyu/Senkaku waters have plagued the region with additional security concerns.¹¹⁸ It was only in this year that an agreement was reached to re-establish a hotline between leaders in order to facilitate rapid communication to defuse confrontational incidents between official agents.¹¹⁹

Though communication measures have been slow to be implemented, actual military action or even confrontation between China and Japan is unlikely. The loss of trade revenue would be a powerful blow to the economies of both nations and cost far

¹¹⁸ Valencia, Mark J. "The East China Sea Dispute: Context, Claims, Issues, and Possible Solutions." *Asian Perspective*. Vol. 31 No. 1 (2007): 130-131

¹¹⁹ English.Xinhuanet.Com "China, Japan agree to reestablish hotline between premiers." 31 May 2010. <http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/china/2010-05/31/c_13324942.htm>

more than any such action would by itself. Still, the instability in relations is illustrated by this year's fishing trawler row, in which high-level talks were once again canceled through the actions of a rogue individual. When protesters demonstrated in China over the incident, they struck out at Japanese businesses, though they were limited by police and prevented from causing serious damage. The pattern of demonstrating against Japanese businesses in China is a familiar one over the last decade, and can only cause harm to the bilateral trade relationship that has benefited both nations so tremendously.

The current situation in Sino-Japanese relations remains rocky. Historical issues remain unaddressed, though the actions of the current Japanese government have sought to avoid aggravating them. Resolution of the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands issue seems distant and possibly unachievable in the current time frame. The current domestic climate in both countries would not allow for any compromising positions such as joint administration. The East China Sea would probably face similar resistance from domestic nationalist coalitions, but in that area of the dispute, the governments at Level I have a strong incentive to maintain the widest possible claim in order to retain the resources of the sea bed.

The conflicts of historical memory contribute greatly to mistrust between China and Japan. Some of this is engineered from the state to the people, in the case of China's Patriotic Education Campaigns. The Chinese regime's quest for economic growth has required a great deal of sacrifice on the part of some citizens, and validation of this sacrifice requires some kind of victory from the government over a foe, or reward of

those who previously suffered for the sake of growth.

If China cannot supply the latter, it must at least seem vigilant for the former, for defense of China against the threats it claims caused the current situation. Defusing this pressure against Japan will take time, a change in elite policy, and persuasion of the new media to give up lucrative stories about Japanese wrongdoings. It is no easy task, and the various levels of Chinese government face numerous smaller acts of resistance that threaten the government should they ever turn larger.

Japan faces a conservative movement that is in retreat, though still influential. China faces mass movements that seek an outlet for many frustrations. Both nations are working towards a future that remains uncertain. Nationalism plays upon powerful human psychological tendencies towards group identification, and shaking that identification to permit a broader category or permit compromise of group-identified values is difficult. Careful diplomacy and leadership are required, a great deal of effort towards understanding that will face tremendous obstacles from popular values. Ultimately, this effort will be necessary for a peaceful and prosperous regional future.

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